BESIDE ENGAGEMENT: A QUEER AND FEMINIST READING OF SOCIALLY NEGOTIATED ART THROUGH DIALOGUE, LOVE, AND PRAXIS

Yet Chor Sunshine Wong (BFA, MA)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the University of Wolverhampton
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2019

Signature: …….

Date: …….

Abstract

This thesis constructs a concept of *socially negotiated art* as an emergent practice. Displacing a socially *engaged* art, it uses a methodology of "beside" (Sedgwick, 2003) to explore the affective and corporeal relations that are made, maintained, and transformed as part of the artistic process. The research draws upon queer studies, feminist studies, and affect studies to formulate an embodied criticality that self-reflexively confronts the more difficult dimensions of these art practices.

The opening chapter analyses and disrupts a selection of influential concepts that have shaped the understanding of socially "engaged" art. Their "refractions" are interventions on art theories including relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 2000), participatory art (Bishop, 2012), concatenations of art and revolution (Raunig, 2007), and the continuing avant-garde project (Léger, 2012) through the lens of embodiment. A number of refractions, including counterpublics and disorientation, recur as important anchor points throughout the research. The subsequent three chapters investigate the "relational material" of socially negotiated art. Each one of them breaks down one of its constitutive aspects: dialogue (chapter two), love (chapter three) and praxis (chapter four), which are parameters borrowed from the work of radical educator Paulo Freire. Because of the significant overlap between radical education and socially negotiated art in politics and practice, and because Freire's pedagogy offers clear demonstrations of situated practice, his writings are used to help centre relations within the context of a socially negotiated art. Ultimately, the three components are unsettled by corporeal and affective proximity: the open inclusivity of dialogue is questioned by intimate, frictive forms like gossip and teasing; the mobilisation of political love multiplies into attachments, body borders, and caring labour; and the transformative urge of praxis is complicated by subjective displacement and situatedness. Together, they present a theoretical articulation of a more peculiar and textured relational material that contributes towards a socially *negotiated* – rather than *engaged* – art.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been completed under the generous guidance of my Director of Studies, Alexei Penzin, along with my supervisors Adam Kossoff and Dew Harrison. Thank you for the many conversations and words of encouragement that have helped to keep the momentum going.

The artists whom I met and interviewed in the process have been vital in shaping the direction of the research. Thank you for showing me the way: Ania Bas, Hannah Hull, Sophie Hope, Steve Pool, Rachael Dodd, Anthony Schrag, Hannah Nicklin, Leung Po-Shan, Wen Yau, Yiu Kwan-Ho, Clara Cheung, Gum Cheng, Michael Leung, Yuen Kin-Leung, Vangi Fong, Roland Ip, Sampson Wong, Elaine Ho, Him Lo, Yuen Yan, and Ching Chin-Wai.

To all my friends and colleagues who have given gossip, lightness, and lucid words of advice: thank you for pepping me up, for propping me up.

Thank you Mum for being our entire life maintenance system for months at a go; thank you Joan and Martin for your time, energy, and belief that willed me along; thank you Dad for talking me through some rougher patches and reminding me to take my vitamins; thank you Apollo for being the more practically-minded sibling; and thank you Mat for having the physical and emotional resources to manage work, home, and a toddler when I was not able to.

To Ivor, for all the joy you give.

Introduction

In this study, I am setting myself the task of looking at the relational material of socially negotiated art. What I take to be socially negotiated art has been differently framed, theorised, and historicised as the avant-garde, community art, relational art, and socially engaged art, amongst many others. The lattermost term has been widely circulated for the past decade, and is one that this thesis relies on for context and critique. More precisely, it is an entry point to examine how the social is "engaged". Such a formulation presumes artists *entering into* the social realm as part of their practice, motivated by different needs or desires to drive concrete, political change, or – at a less idealistic but equally important level – to meet people and get paid for their work. Some combination of the above is usually the case. Yet the conditions of being engaged, i.e. taking part alongside others, in the messy process of making art in context of places, politics, bodies of all kinds, etc., are not sufficiently examined. Pablo Helguera produced a short "materials and techniques handbook" in 2011 that is perhaps the first and only publication to reference the "material" of socially engaged art. The purpose, however, is primarily utilitarian, as he attempts to present guidelines, situation set-ups, interactions with others, potential pitfalls, and other aspects of socially engaged art for anyone who seeks a practical overview of its components. Likewise, Gregory Sholette and Chloë Bass' more recent "Art as Social Action" (2018) features project descriptions that are collected from artists working in different places around the world. They are bite-size and digestable, with

each contributor concisely explaining what a particular piece of work sought to achieve and what the outcomes were.

My intention here is less to offer a pragmatic overview of approaches found in socially engaged art practices than it is to ask what it is like to live out a socially *negotiated* art. The analysis undertaken is therefore less driven by the sharing of "useful models [that] better influence and orchestrate desired outcomes" (Helguera, 2011, p.xv), and instead, is focused on analysing *the complexity of the relational material as it emerges from embodied, socially negotiated practices.*

This means that being "beside" others becomes key, which is an idea borrowed from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's introduction to her essay collection in "Touching Feeling" (2003). A recurring theme of the book is the inarticulate in-the-midst (of others, atmospheres, doing, etc.) that *feels through* knowledge without always landing squarely on what it is exactly. This is found, for example, in her analysis of *reparative* readings, a formulation she uses to contrast with paranoid readings often done in theoretical work: rather than engage in a (paranoid) process of unveiling and uncovering deeper, greater truths, ways of knowing can co-exist and open / be opened to other (reparative) pathways. Encountering this at an early point of the research was vital; the surveying of existing theories, arguments, and projects was a dizzying endeavour, and the encouragement to work "beside" them made possible an emergent and embodied form of knowledge that, at the same time, parallels the processes of these art practices.

The intention, then, is to propose a different critical framework for thinking about art produced in the social realm. This departs from a certain categorising of art that falls in line with art historical research, since this tends to assess more than question, leaving the ambiguities of art's social desires relatively undisturbed. These are precisely the focus here, which requires entering the site of artistic production. The thesis therefore argues for an attunement to the discomforts, compromises, and limits that themselves produce a critical perspective on the (artistic, social, affective, etc.) relations involved. It stands in some contrast to studies that boost or slacken the relevance of art practices by emphasising their artistic, political, or historical lineages. Hearkening to the reparative research of being "beside", observations like the following one becomes an issue in the context of this thesis: "a world of hand-wringing practitioners easily satisfied with the feeling of 'doing good' in a community". Taken from Claire Bishop's endorsement of Helguera's aforementioned "materials and techniques handbook", the disparagement is clear. But are art practitioners really that "easily satisfied"? What about the pressure of delivery, the restrictive environments, the playing out of (power) relations? Or the under-articulated feelings and menial care work that are *also* part of these practices? The study reincorporates the "doing good" within a serious examination of socially *negotiated* art that does not merely write off these practices as naïve.

Introducing "beside" as a self-reflexive methodology

This study draws connections between art, theory, feelings, and infrastructures to reveal how bodies and relations co-constitute one another. A key impetus is the fatigue and lapses of conviction that come as part of working in the under-supported peripheries of the art world. Having taught, curated, and organised different art projects in these spaces, my professional experiences span hugely in terms of practice and emotional investment. The latter has been especially important (and difficult) to acknowledge, because the "not feeling right" has shaped the very tone, trajectory, and content of this research. Yet wrestling with that has enabled the crafting of a different, more embodied language that is critical of the transformative potentials in social "engagement".

One question posed of my study is why – in a thesis foregrounding a situated "beside" as its methodology – there is little mention of my own practice history. The academic answer is that this project needed to zoom out if it were to understand relations as an artistic medium more generally; the honest answer is that I had been feeling conflicted about my work. As the early momentum of a new doctoral project – a renewed optimism and fieldwork opportunity in Hong Kong – settled into something slower, I felt differently about the original aims of this study, namely: 1. it seemed disingenuous to talk about "transformative potentials of socially engaged art" given my ambivalence about this kind of work, and 2. it is beyond my limits as a researcher to closely analyse the cultural landscape in Hong Kong when I

have not lived there in recent years. Despite the broadened scope on "transformation", the same, difficult sentiments would return to interfere with the research aim and steer it towards what is actually experienced – or towards the *relational material* of a socially *negotiated* art.

This was when the aforementioned reparative research started to make its mark. In Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's "Touching Feeling" (2003), she describes the push-pull of being and knowing from "beside", a position that "permits a spacious agnosticism" of "noncontradiction" but does not "depend on a fantasy of metonymically egalitarian or even pacific relations" (Sedgwick, 2003, p.8). Crucially then, the reparative relationality of "beside" is not about progress (like "towards transformation") or conciliation (like "being together"), but about staying with the tension, unease, aggression, etc. of contact. The textured materiality of "beside" is found tellingly on the cover image of her book: it features the artist Judith Scott – who also happens to be a deaf, older woman with Down's syndrome – in a fierce embrace with a sculpture she made. Standing on a plinth at around the same height and shape as her upper body, it is made up of compulsively tight tangles of cord and string wound repeatedly into an imprecise egg shape. There is a dent on one side against which Scott presses her face, eyes open. "There is no single way to understand the 'besideness' of these two forms, even though one of them was made by the other. The affect that saturates the photo is mysterious, or at least multiple, in quality" (Sedgwick, 2003, p.23). Multiple, for instance, in the way the scene similarly winds itself around words that fail to describe what is transmitted (consolation, sadness, understanding, ignorance, etc.). As a way of knowing, "beside" invites uncertainties and

intuitions as well. This was a crucial point of re-orientation: turning "beside" into this study's methodological approach meant tempering the thrust of transformation with negotiations of the social space.

On the use of negotiation

In the thesis, negotiation is a way to describe a number of things, most notably the effects of contact, in-between spaces, and proximity. This means exploring different levels of relational dynamics, which includes those between individuals of an artwork (see: 2.2.2. on gossip and teasing as in-group forms of frictive communication), project infrastructures (see: 3.3.2. on art practices within a care chain), and broader affective tendencies (see: 3.2.1. on the choreography of revolutionary moments). The correlating questions would be: what happens when artists, participants, and commissioners are made to work together? And what comes out of the connections between art, social contexts, and institutions?

The generative and social aspects of negotiation are used to highlight the constant pushing and yielding of bodies – something that also defines them in return, making them always already in relation. To expand upon this claim, negotiation is differently formulated throughout the four chapters. It is first introduced to argue for an agency of action (see: 1.1.4. on the material discursivity of phenomena) that performatively shapes matter. With this in mind, I turn to mostly Anglo-American settings of art, education, and political

work, as well as day-to-day life, to describe and critique the ways in which negotiation is embodied. Examples include: our bodily orientations in relation to the (heteronormative) horizon (see: 1.1.6.); challenging the presumptions of dialogue and equality by looking at frictive forms of communication (see: chapter two); living out the artistic desire to do something for others (see: chapter three); and reconsidering "praxis" with a greater sense of situatedness (see: chapter four). In all of these, negotiation is the social act that questions, reflects, and situates us "beside" others.

The proposal of a socially negotiated art has also engendered a different language, which hearkens to the study's queer and feminist viewpoint on the one hand, and on the other, to the study's emergent themes that relate to embodiment: space, textures, and emotions. As such, the thesis rethinks dialogue (chapter two) through the description of "frictive speech". Such a term does not pre-designate the ideal conditions of speech in line with Habermasian public discourse, but instead, alerts us to the *how we feel* when we speak with others and figure out the communication possibilities as we go along. Similarly, the refraction on love (chapter three) presents "blockages", "impasses", and "borders", while a more self-reflexive praxis (chapter four) emphasises "disorientation" as an intimate reminder of how contexts push back at artistic intentions. The attunement to embodiment has therefore come with the crafting of a more concrete language that gives form to relations as a material.

This is crucial to the overall aim of the thesis, which is to foreground the

entanglements of art and life, something that departs from a more straightforward *overlap* between the two. The use of a spatial, textural, and emotional language brings attention to the fact that a socially negotiated art facilitates living experiences that are unpredictable and emergent. The actions, wants, and stakes of these art practices are thus positioned as questions (instead of statements) within the social. To do so is to make plain the changing – deteriorating, even – cultural and political atmospheres that directly affect socially negotiated art. The rise of nationalism, widespread Islamophobia in the West, the climate catastrophe etc. can translate into doubt and displacement as much as they incite outrage and action. In the end, negotiation addresses an increasingly untenable socially "engaged" art of the crisis present by reinstating uncertainty as a critical part of the art's relational processes.

A guide to the theories and art practices used in the study

To think through the "transformative potentials of socially engaged art" as my former premise, one of the first reference texts I turned to was Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970). Of his earlier writing, this book especially recalls the anti-colonial and revolutionary atmosphere that pervaded Brazilian leftist politics in the 1960s. This desire to spur change still strikes a chord with fringe art workers now, particularly if their practices are consciously dislocated from institutional norms. The fact that Freire similarly questions the institutional norms of education means that his work has been

relevant to such art workers both theoretically and practically. While the thesis would deviate from Freire's thinking, it nonetheless uses three of his more prominent concepts – dialogue, love, and praxis – as starting points for thinking through art's desire to be closely intertwined with life's struggles.

As the research became more interested in the affective and material, so too did its theoretical and practical references. The key areas of art and pedagogy were being refined from a more embodied perspective, one that was articulated through queer, feminist, and affect studies. Works produced by scholars and practitioners across these concerns reconfigured the thesis at a fundamental level, particularly those of Sara Ahmed, Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Karen Barad in the first phase of the research overhaul. The second half of the thesis sees affect studies take on a central role, particularly through Lauren Berlant's public-making of inarticulate feelings that are typically ignored. Their work (i.e. Berlant's – they / them being their preferred pronoun) promotes a kind of emotional rigour, which the research adapts to further an embodied criticality of the relational material.

The research gear-change could also be found in the way art practices were incorporated. The context of my fieldwork in Hong Kong and the questions posed to the artists became problematic as I grew sceptical about art's "transformative" thrust. This led to my putting aside the notes and interviews I had collected in Hong Kong until their place in the research were clearer. At the same time, my own practice history remained emotionally and thematically out of bounds, since the thesis reconfiguration did not (at first)

include the exploration of failure or dissatisfaction. Yet these would become the most resonant feelings. Their importance gained traction from the reading, writing, and above all the word-of-mouth recommendations to visit or look up specific art projects. An interest in the hidden labour of social art processes was nurtured, e.g. the managing of expectations, the forging of connections, the zapping of energy and personal time, etc. The completed thesis now features a range of practices that go about these relational issues in different ways, from candid conversations (see: Ania Bas and Anthony Schrag in 2.2.) to a performative monologue (see: The Atlas Group in 1.1.3.); from a post-mortem reflection (see: Hannah Nicklin in 3.3.2.) to the sharing of secrets (see: Annette Krauss in 2.2.2.), amongst others. Though disparate, the connection between the practices is found in the relations they make, maintain, and critique.

The revisiting of the Hong Kong fieldwork was done in chapter four of the thesis. Having by then discussed the reparative framework for an embodied, socially negotiated art practice, the closing chapter presented an opportunity for embodiment in its most literal sense. By that point, I had the perspective and language to combine the active doing of "praxis" with the displaced feelings that, together, comprised the "live" part of research. The inclusion of my fieldwork was a late decision, made because the methodology of "beside" had taken on self-reflexivity as a critical part of queer and feminist embodiment. The autoethnographical analysis of my time in Hong Kong is therefore an attempt to show the reader some of the more personal and practical orientations underpinning the thesis. Given more time, there would

definitely have been a more thorough reflection of my earlier practice history.

Socially negotiated art and its relation to other studies of art-political practices

I stated at the start of this introduction that the research remained deliberately open to the problems and ambiguities of social art processes. The thesis position with regards to art's socio-political role was therefore somewhat suspended over the period of research and writing. Doing so helped me feel out relations in their own terms, particularly those that are suppressed or trivialised (e.g. socially negotiated art as menial care; as the blurring of borders in transgressive and intrusive ways).

But the centring of relations ultimately pointed towards a dilemma, one that is so ordinary and expected that it is subsumed within any given socially negotiated project: art does not actually *have* a place within our lived contexts, and yet it cannot help trying to *make* one. This position could only have been generated by the writing of the thesis, as it became clear how art practices yield in such different ways to art world standards *as well as* to the desire for social impact. Thus, the thesis has an off-kilter – queer and feminist, to be exact – orientation with studies that take a harder, defensive line, be it of art's autonomy or political efficacy. There have been many notable attempts in the last twenty years to understand or dismiss art practices in the social realm, to genre-define art forms more or less invested in political change (a selection is featured in chapter one). But more recent

studies have focused instead on the situated and descriptive, in order to demonstrate an art project's inseparability from its local context (see: "Living as Form", Thompson, 2012; "Creative Space: Art and Spatial Resistance in East Asia", DOXA collective, 2014; "Strike Art", McKee, 2015). My research approach is found somewhere between these two: it indeed theorises an art form, but by focusing on how they negotiate their (ir)relevance by being "beside" bodies, places, and desires. This goes back to the inescapability of crisis in the last decade, which reiterates the thesis position to be attuned to what it means to live in this moment and not merely continue demanding its transformation.

An overview of the four chapters

This study is made up of two parts, spread over four chapters. The first part "reads beside" a constellation of theories to extract and refract influential ideas that make up the field of "socially engaged art"; the second (and main) part of the study looks into the key components of what I call the *relational material* found in the art practices themselves. The thesis structure attempts, first of all, to understand how existing theoretical and political conditions have influenced the way "socially engaged art" is understood. Secondly, it is shaped by the study's task of theorising "beside", which focuses the research on the bodies, relations, and feelings of practice. As such, the study deliberately bears signs of self-reflexive adjustments to show that these take place as much in the research as the practice of art.

Chapter one is an investigation and refraction of six theories from the last two decades that inform this study's scope of socially engaged art. They have been selected because of the influence they have exerted in field, and a reading-beside of these texts would help to eke out the beginnings of a queer and feminist perspective. This involves asking more specific questions of the core idea within each text: the social interstice in relational aesthetics becomes a performative third space via Homi Bhabha and Judith Butler (1.1.1.); the community in site-specificity is recast as a potential counterpublic of othered, lonely bodies via Michael Warner and Zygmunt Bauman (1.1.2.); empathy of dialogical aesthetics unravels into a complicit dispossession via the correspondence between Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou (1.1.3.); the antagonism of participatory art is made more accountable through Karen Barad's materially discursive negotiations (1.1.4.); the concatenations of art and revolution machines point towards the queer rewards of failure by way of Jack Halberstam (1.1.5.); and Marc James Léger's sinthomeopathic art is buffered by John Roberts' more recent analysis of the avant-garde (2015) and their respective theories of discordant subjectivity are read beside Sara Ahmed's queer (dis)orientation (1.1.6.). By the end of these six refractions, I have a set of concepts at hand that challenges the social as a place to be engaged with; it is reformulated, instead, into an emergent space made up of embodied negotiations. This insistence on material experience resonates with art and critical theorist Irit Rogoff's notion of "smuggling [as] embodied criticality" (Rogoff, 2006): moving contraband from A to B, smuggling takes place illegitimately *beside*

and without regard to established boundaries which, via what she calls "the curatorial", helps to "unthink those binaries of inside the museum and outside in the public space" (ibid.). There is therefore a crucial connection to be made between the queer, spatial refractions of chapter one, embodied criticality, and its ability to introduce (or smuggle) other ways of being / seeing into socially engaged art.

Following the refractions, the methodological section that concludes chapter one details the influence of Sedgwick's "beside" on the one hand (1.2.1.) and presents on the other a pivotal influence to the original 'transformative' focus of the study: Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970) and his writings on literacy activism (1.2.2.). At the start of the research process, his work provided a means of thinking through the intersections between radical education and socially engaged art. There is in both fields the drive to depart from their respective structural confines in order to be embedded in life and its struggles. At the heart of his work is a practical sensibility that is oriented towards a socially oriented consciousness-raising (or conscientisation) and worldmaking. His focus on collectively produced subjectivities is therefore hugely relevant, evidenced above all in what he calls "culture circles" that closely resemble the co-productive environments in many art practices within the social realm. As part of his broader pedagogical approach, he repeatedly tackles dialogue, love, and praxis, which for him are mobilising forces capable of enacting change against oppression. These facets end up as the starting points for the study's later analyses and refractions, making up the themes for chapters two, three, and four.

In chapter two, the opening focus is on the presumed horizontality of dialogue argued in Freire's writing. His activism is discussed at the beginning of the chapter, which go hand in hand with his understanding of dialogue as a mediating tool for political change (2.1.1.). What follows is the gradual rearticulation of dialogue into what I call frictive communication, approached in three ways: an examination of art and education theories, a descriptive breakdown of two art projects, and a counterproposal of alternative speech practices. The turn to education theories outline the possibility of exclusivity and disagreement as productive (2.1.2.), while Rancière's dissenting aesthetic regime is softened into something less rigid and more yielding to social negotiation (2.1.3.). In the second part of the chapter, I investigate two art projects that differently shore up the presumptions of dialogue (2.2.1.); while one appeals to its mutuality, the other is deliberately designed to throw off any appeals to conciliation. In the final part of chapter two, I indicate towards frictive forms of speech as intimate ways of knowing valued above all by marginalised in-groups (2.2.2.). Referring to feminist examinations of gossip as a social epistemology and the use of teasing in queer domains, I ultimately disrupt the equilibrium of dialogue by advocating for a dissenting polyvocality (2.3.): gossip poses a challenge to formal paths of knowledge with its evaluative informality, while the play-aggression of teasing deliberately negotiates new behavioural rules that exist between friendliness and attack.

Chapter three begins with a shift in atmosphere, introducing love as an affective intensity that, in Freire's work, sustains hope for change. The role of

love is excavated and aligned with the liberation theology of 1960s Latin America, making it a vital, motivating force behind his thinking (3.1.1.). I then look at two contrasting perspectives on the political potential of love, specifically those of Michael Hardt and Lauren Berlant (3.1.2.). This examination comes to a difficult end when it leaves behind the "proper" way to love and draws instead on the cruel optimism of intimate publics. Here, the crux lies in the ambivalence of attachments and how they cannot be undone or explained away with intent. With this in mind, the second part depicts two scenes of attachment to account for the different ways that bodies magnetise towards one another. They encompass the coalescing swell of protest, which is refracted through a choreographic lens (3.2.1.) and the self-defence of nationalism (3.2.2.), of body borders and spatial corporeality. Concluding the chapter is a section that looks at care as a dimension of loving labour. Borrowing a description used by Silvia Federici, I expand upon the possibilities suggested by the "extradomestic" (3.3.1.). While she uses this to describe the paid labour taken on by women upon being "freed" from (the outsourcing of) housework, I also see within it a potential to reflect on the ways that socially negotiated art is intertwined with care (3.3.2.). To do so, I go down three different paths: the first one puts care beside meniality, often associated with caring labour of the body but reappropriated here as a means of questioning the position of socially negotiated art within a "care chain" (Hochschild, 2012). I then alight on the community art movement in the UK of the 1970s and examine how its aspirations for cultural democracy was turned into service provision and social care. The last path that I explore in extradomesticity attempts to understand the infrastructure that props up

socially negotiated art practices in two different projects: one that deliberately questions the service model with that of exchange, and another that maps out the relations between commissioner, artist, and participants within the life of five different art projects.

In chapter four, I lay bare the practices that led to the drastic shift in research approach and subject. As with the previous two chapters, I begin with an orientation point in Freire, who sees praxis as a way out from the dehumanisation of oppression (4.1.). This involves taking a closer look at his descriptions of culture circles to have a better sense of what his pedagogy looks like when it is placed in situ. Further focusing into the "action" of praxis, the rest of the chapter revisits the encounter and action of the early fieldwork in Hong Kong, done just weeks before the Umbrella Revolution. It confronts the scene of dislocation, which is in fact the experiential reference point for this study's embodied examinations throughout. The turn to a more autoethnographic voice is explained (4.2.1.) and Hong Kong's situational context explained in brief (4.2.2.). Four interviews are selected, excerpted, and analysed in context of the work done in the previous three chapters. Some of the most important observations and affective dimensions from the trip are presented here as the embodied moments that motivated the study to focus on the generative potential of the social in-between. As an epilogue to the study, the final chapter provides a glimpse of the research experience and what it feels like for pre-defined intentions to go awry. It is also an attempt to self-reflectively implicate the researcher in the knowledge they produce by showing the twists and (wrong) turns they make in the process.

The aim, therefore, is to reconfigure praxis as situatedness negotiations, in which change is always tethered to the specific demands of bodies and relations.

1. From socially engaged to negotiated: refractions of theoretical perspectives and a research methodology

In an article he wrote for Frieze Magazine in 2012, Lars Bang Larsen lamented the slow, protracted death of the 1990s art, which was famously epitomised through the "social turn". Though this shift once "gave visual art a new lease of life at a point when it had been declared dead (along with the avant-garde, the novel and the author)" (Larsen, 2012, p.93), it also saw the corresponding disappearance of "former keywords of artistic and social critique – conformism, alienation, negation" (ibid., p.95). Of interest is that he states "the social persists as a theme" (ibid.) in the closing paragraph, suggesting that indeed, the position of art is firmly dominant over that of the social, the latter of which is the *object* of art's investigation. From this perspective, artists can decide to pick another, more relevant 'theme' to mull over and with it, a new aesthetic framework that no longer concerns itself with sociality. Yet Lars Bang Larsen overestimates the pervasiveness of socially engaged practices in the art world wherein celebrity artists are made; even within the same issue of Frieze, the focus is clearly on art fairs and galleries that are focused above all on medium-specific art. And secondly, if the social does indeed persist, it would suggest a more complex reason than merely the artists' resistance to thematic change. It points to the negotiation of art and life, and specifically for this study, the former's complicated desire to be situated within the latter. The disparate field of socially engaged art – which I intend to reconfigure into a socially *negotiated* art over the course of

this study – has been differently framed and theorised both aesthetically and politically. In order to position art practices that draw from aesthetics, politics, embodiment, and pedagogy amongst others, there needs to be a clarification of their developmental trajectory so far.

As such, there are two tasks in this chapter: the main one is to introduce six key theories that have been particularly influential to the discourse of socially engaged art as articulated in western European and North American contexts. Specifically, I intend to reconsider them from a perspective of embodiment, a position that is supported through queer and feminist thinking in the context of this study. The eventual focus of this research is on the very social engagement-turned-negotiation as a *relational material* inextricable from the bodies that perform it. As a term widely circulated in the last decade, theories and criticism of "socially engaged art" already abound. It is not my intention here to contribute yet another framework that challenges its currency either as an art form or as a political instrument; after all, the field is continually shaped and reshaped by the specificities of practice, which keep the debate from settling. Rather, the primary aim of this chapter is to look at some of the most dominant and pertinent voices within the field in order to re-examine them via bodies and relations.

My second task is to spell out a methodology that is built on the re-examination of these key ideas. By attempting to understand them through matters of embodiment, I leave aside matters of art genre definition in order to nurture an analysis that encompasses both art and politics as part of a

deeply ambivalent, socially *negotiated* process. I therefore argue for a research positioning and self-reflexivity that is rooted in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's spatially-oriented "beside" (2003), which provides an important reminder of one's inevitable contact and relationality.

As such, queer studies in particular offer a "broad critique of multiple social antagonisms" that include "race, gender, class, nationality, and religion" as well as sexuality (Eng, Halberstam and Muñoz in Eng, 2005, p.1). Eng et al. maintain that

> sexuality is intersectional, not extraneous to other modes of difference, and calibrated to a firm understanding of *queer as a political metaphor without a fixed referent*. (ibid., my emphasis)

By injecting a sense of instability, questioning, and experimentation to sex, gender, and bodily norms, queerness is capable of taking on a mediatory function that provides the world with a critical lens, especially in subversive meaning-making; it allows disobedient corporealities to reconfigure cultural phenomena and thus think differently about belonging, marginalisation, and identity. Without "a fixed referent", a queer refraction of socially *engaged* art into socially *negotiated* art might begin with the following question: how is this art form oriented in relation to and in deviance of the art world? To be clear, this chapter follows the conventional usage of "socially engaged art" to examine more recent aspects of its theory and history. As the argument stresses a more embodied understanding, it refers increasingly to a "socially

negotiated art" by the end of the theoretical overview to emphasise the relational in-between spaces.

1.1. An outline of the socially engaged art theories under investigation

This chapter takes into account some of the more prominent arguments with regards to socially engaged art and reconsider their most pertinent claims from a queer and embodied perspective. By selecting these six theories, I seek to trace their influence in current perceptions of socially engaged art. This is not an authoritative narrative on the theoretical development of the art form, but an exploration of the theoretical associations and proximities that have been formative to the field.

The art theories examined from 1.1.1. to 1.1.6. are all positioned within a western European or North American perspective and often reference and/or critique one another. Living and working within this space myself, I present some of the more significant concepts and re-analyse them with a lens that considers seriously the complexities of lived experience. The six specific theories of socially engaged art are placed more or less in chronological order; some are in direct conversation with one another and therefore positioned one after another, which slightly defies the chronology.

The first theory examined is *relational aesthetics*, a term coined in the mid-

1990s by the French curator Nicolas Bourriaud. It was first employed in a 1996 exhibition he put together for the CAPC Musée d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux. Though his subsequent collection of essays in "Relational Aesthetics" has been criticised for its lack of theoretical or political insight, his aesthetic and philosophical reflections nonetheless function as one of the earliest attempts at consolidating a burgeoning field of practices that, for Bourriaud, demonstrated "artwork as social interstice" (Bourriaud, 1998, p.14). Emphasising the social over the artistic object – or, more accurately, the social *as* artistic object – Bourriaud's theory was amongst the first to pinpoint the co-produced intersubjective space as the site and form of progressive art in the 1990s.

Shortly after the English translation of Bourriaud's essays appeared in 2000, art historian Miwon Kwon elaborates the significance of *site-specificity* in "One Place After Another", which culminates with her description of the contemporary socially engaged artist as a nomadic "exotic tourist". The second theory in this overview draws upon site-specific contexts that involve people and histories often foreign to the artist. Of note is her critique of community engagement and its correlating need to seek out recognised commonalities which, in her view, disregards the irreconcilable differences between members. Kwon proposes instead the conscious shaping and reshaping of community based on its "unworking" (Jean-Luc Nancy's *désoeuvré*) (Kwon, 2001, p.155), which she provides as a possible framework in dealing with the difficulties and negotiations of "collective artistic praxis" (ibid., p.7).

The third theory turns to the interpersonal space of artistically staged encounters. Grant Kester's 2004 "Conversation Pieces" introduces *dialogical aesthetics* that places consultation, interaction, and listening at the locus of artistic production. Unlike Bourriaud, the works he examines deliberately refute conventional gallery spaces, taking place instead in socially and/or politically driven contexts. Contrasting a historical avant-garde aestheticism with an ostensibly more egalitarian positioning that privileges sociability and conversation, he situates empathetic forms such as speaking, listening, and feminist forms of "connecting knowledges" (Belenky et al, 1986) at the core of dialogical aesthetics. The influence of this publication has been especially pertinent for artists whose practices articulate localised political concerns through informal social processes.

The fourth theory looks into Claire Bishop's analysis on *participatory art*, which culminates with her 2012 publication "Artificial Hells". One of her earliest texts on the subject came in 2006, in an Artforum article that critiques Kester's dialogical aesthetics and looks at the "social turn" in art. "Artificial Hells" is a more extensive critique of socially engaged art and its subsumption within socially ameliorative programmes, a move that destroys what Rancière has called the "aesthetic regime of art" (Rancière cited by Bishop, 2012, p.27). By casting the turn from that of a "social" to an "ethical" one, she problematises many artists' redirected focus from *artistic negation* and *aisthesis* to efficacy (Bishop, 2012, p.19). Indeed, her intention to steer the discourse back to art as a political experience in its own right (again, via

Rancière) is found within the "participatory art" referenced throughout her text, which calls out the redundancy of socially engaged art: because "what artist *isn't* socially engaged?" (ibid., p.2).

The fifth and sixth theories home in on the more explicit politicisation of socially engaged art. Gerald Raunig's *transversal concatenations* rethinks the relation between art and revolution via a post-structuralist investment in micropolitics (Raunig, 2007), while Marc James Léger's *sinthomeopathy* formulates a means of resistance that operates firmly within the aesthetics and criticality of over-identification (Léger, 2012). These two arguments are placed in proximity with one another as the authors are both concerned with activist art, which they explicitly name and define in different ways. Between an ongoing process of artistic-revolutionary becoming (Raunig) and a conscious summoning of a unified opposition of which art is part (Léger), the two final theories offer a kind of comparative with regards to the difficult positioning of art and politics.

Each of the six theories in this constellation are accompanied with their reading-beside (see: introduction; also 1.2.1.) through a queer and feminist understanding of embodiment The aim is twofold: to introduce this study's main art theoretical influences and to articulate a framework from which a more tangible and embodied socially negotiated art can emerge. The goal of chapter one, then, is to confront and refract some of the most defining perspectives of the art form so that their lived dimension is better underscored.

1.1.1. The social interstice of Nicolas Bourriaud's relational aesthetics

At the time that Bourriaud was writing in the 1990s, the computerisation of the industrialised world was enabling new forms of connectivity and sociability that he observed as susceptible to reification: "The social bond has turned into a standardised artefact" (Bourriaud, 1998, p.9). Surveyed in the collection of essays on relational aesthetics are works that sought to "inhabit the world in a better way" (ibid., p.13). For him, art constitutes the space between humans and a world of mechanised and automatised communication, one that has the "city streets swept clean of relational dross" (ibid., p.16). Written prior to the deeper analyses of affect in late capitalism, he focuses instead on the sterility and the mechanisation of human relations; the detachment of everyday social routines becomes the problem-site for artists. Their focus, then, is on instigating different, more poetic moments of sociality comprising variously of group choreography, Fluxus-style instructions, role playing, cooking, etc. Borrowing from Marx's notion of interstice in which "trading communities […] elude the capitalist economic context by being removed from the law of profit" (ibid., p.16), Bourriaud's relational aesthetics generate *social* interstices in which interpersonal exchanges are no longer only predicated on trade or money, but on desire and pleasure.

What the artworks offer are not representations of utopia, but smaller utopian possibilities that, for Bourriaud, represent the artistic and political radicality of

the 1990s and make them the heir apparent for avant-garde art:

> [T]he age of the New Man, future-oriented manifestos, and calls for a better world already to be walked into and lived in is well and truly over. These days, utopia is being lived on a subjective, everyday basis, in the real time of concrete and intentionally fragmentary experiments. […] [P]resent-day art is roundly taking on and taking up the legacy of the twentieth century avant-gardes, while at the same time challenging their dogmatism and their teleological doctrines. (Bourriaud, 1998, p.45)

The smaller intimacies found in a selection of practices are observed and grouped into a relational artistic tendency. His curatorial authorship could have also been responding to more momentous political shifts at the time – namely the ongoing collapse of the Eastern bloc and the accelerating advance of neoliberalism. In containing a disparate set of artistic intentions and methods, he zooms into social solicitation and performativity in particular as a "a space-time frame encoded by the art system, and by the artist him/herself" (ibid., p.82). How this artistically supported social interstice questions business-oriented transactions is not fleshed out beyond the reiteration of art's role in "subjectivization" (ibid., p.88). Yet his essays have helped forecast a specific trajectory of contemporary art in the next two decades. To this day, the debate about art's engagement / entanglement with the social continues unabated. Yet by putting together works of art that are more different than they are alike, Bourriaud inadvertently prioritises the stylisation

of social relations more so than the specific ways in which the relations are conceived and produced. He condenses them simply into the "social substrate" (ibid., p.15) and remarks "we already know that attitudes become forms, and we should now realise that forms prompt models of sociability" (ibid., p.58).

As a result, Bourriaud's critics focus on his failure to engage with the particularities of the artists – their positionings, their politics, etc. He does, however, alight on a number of important observations related to the politicised dimension of relational aesthetics: between his formulation of "social interstice" and the continuation of the avant-garde project, he presents two recurring questions that would underscore the discourse on socially engaged art. The Radical Culture Research Collective (RCRC), a group of anonymous artists, activists and researchers working across Berlin, Hamburg, London (England), Montreal, London (Canada), New York, San Francisco, Tampa, Weimar and Vienna, responds to Bourriaud's alignment of relational art with the avant-garde by stressing the latter's explicit political radicality:

> Undoubtedly, the avant-garde tradition continues to be transformed by its own process of self-critique. But it does not give up the radical, macro-historical aim of a real world beyond capitalist relations. And it doesn't settle for the experience of gallery simulations. It's not that experiments in forms and models of sociability are not needed today – they certainly are. But to be politically relevant and effective, such

> experiments need to be grounded in (or at least actively linked to) social movements and struggles. (RCRC, 2007)

This particular stance regards relational art conversely as a "deradicalisation of social desire" (ibid.), uprooted as it is from a conviction to political opposition and tamed down as "little services rendered [that] fill in the cracks in the social bond" (Bourriaud, 1998, p.36). It is clear that Bourriaud intended to contrast relational art with a politically committed art, since the former "do[es] not stem from a 'social' or 'sociological' form of art" (ibid., p.82). The sociality is therefore more of an *applied* one taking place in an artistic framework and does not in any way aim to recalibrate realities directly. Rather, the space-time of art is exploited in the interstice, the gap between our subjectivities and the world by way of the exhibition (ibid.). Instead of focusing on whether relational aesthetics is a miscalculated answer of the 1990s to avant-garde, a more relevant task for the art theoretical overview would be to unpack his concept of "social interstice" and how that reverberates in the later emergence socially engaged art.

In the mid-1990s, Bourriaud's explicit concern was to invent "more effective tools and more valid viewpoints" to understand the "new artistic behaviour" of the time. Unquestioningly embedded within the art institutions and their conventions of presentation, he argues that relational art should not be viewed as "watered down social critique" but rather, it must be formally assessed through the criteria of "the art system" (Bourriaud, 1998 p.82). One characteristic most readily associated with relational aesthetics is conviviality, which, he emphasises, is not the only defining facet of works like Rirkrit

Tiravanija's dinner parties. He also turns to the 'product' of that conviviality, which he describes as

> a complex form that combines a formal structure, objects made available to visitors, and the fleeting image issuing from collective behavior. In a way, the use value of conviviality intermingles with its exhibition value, within a visual project. (ibid., p.83)

While announcing relational art as the interpersonal microutopia that would replace the grandiosity of the old avant-garde, he stops short of positioning it in a critical, self-reflexive relation with contemporary art. In fact, his criticism falls in line with medium-specific, art historical criticism. Relational aesthetics in fact warps and amends social relations as a means of fitting it into an art historical canon. What he calls "inter-human commerce" is possible precisely because they take place within art-delineated spaces, enabling ways of sensing and communicating that are differentiated from the ones he sees as dehumanising and mechanised in life. Bourriaud's intention is not to offer some kind of institutional critique, but to introduce the social as an artistic substrate (Bourriaud, 1998 p.15), thereby establishing its distinctness from the immaterialisation of conceptual art. The works are therefore test grounds for synthesised social relations that are realised within the formalities of artistic presentation, which verifies their status as art and, at the same time, restricts their political situatedness. With regards to the later preoccupation of social engagement, relational aesthetics is still a theoretical gesture that extends toward it, rooted though it may be within the legitimising spaces of

art institutions. His argument relies upon our tapping into sociality as an artistic in-joke; only when filtered through the lens of art can the conviviality, the collaborations, and the social contracts be interpreted as "micro-utopias" and not literally "services rendered" – both are his terminology – through cooking or shoe-shining. That relational art is for the art-initiated was unwittingly illustrated in a Cologne iteration of Rirkrit Tiravanija's *Untitled (Tomorrow Is Another Day,* 1996*)* performance, which was conceived as an inviting, open space for all to come together and cook. In a somewhat tragicomic contrast, police happened to be shooing away a group of homeless people from their makeshift shelter nearby. This was done at the behest of a marketing company, who had been hired to promote the rapidly gentrifying neighbourhood (Kester, 2004, p.104). The social interstice that was supposed to challenge capitalist reification is presented as fictional, used merely to present a commercially idealised image of the area. As Stewart Martin asserts, this indicates the autonomy that Bourriaud accords art from the world of commerce on the one hand, and "relations between people" from "relations to objects" on the other:

> This non-fetishised space of art underpins the realised utopianism of Bourriaud's account; the sense in which art is a relation of social exchange free from exchange-value. But, if this is an antidote to the residual late bourgeois melancholy of Adorno's defence of art as the 'absolute commodity', it is also prone to its own bad conscience, namely, the extent to which Relational Aesthetics collapses art's autonomy from exchange-value, leaving the social exchange of

> relational art subjected to the dominant social relations of capitalist exchange. (Martin, 2007, p.376-7)

Martin also points out that by erroneously targeting the object as commodity, Bourriaud fails to attend to the social labour that produces value in capitalist exchanges (ibid., p.378). By applying a similar duality that separates the art world from the one in which we live and trade in, relational aesthetics produces a direct, correlative reflection of a neoliberal reality in which friendliness is an asset, and service the fastest growing industry. For the social interstice to be a possibility, I therefore argue that there needs to be room for contradiction, uncertainty, and self-awareness; and for conviviality to just be one amongst other frictive relations that differently resist against (and, indeed, also comply with) capitalism. The idea of friction is explored more extensively in chapter two, particularly with regards to disagreement (see: 2.1.3.) and communication (see: 2.2.).

To reflect upon what this elaborated social interstice entails, conviviality is put aside to focus on the generative process of what Homi Bhabha calls the "third space". Speaking from a postcolonial perspective, or "the border work of culture" (Bhabha, 1994, p.10), Bhabha insists on a hybridity that takes place at "the overlap and displacement of domains of difference" – what he also calls "interstices", though pluralised (ibid., p.2). Later on in the text, he becomes more specific about the conditions of this nebulous territory, which he refers to as "Third Space" (ibid., p.54) and capitalises in the style of a proper noun. Here, Bhabha defines third space as a site of refutation:

> Such an intervention [of Third Space] quite properly challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People. […] It is only when we understand that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation, that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or 'purity' of cultures are untenable, even before we resort to empirical historical instances that demonstrate their hybridity. (ibid., p.54-55)

What he emphasises is the persistent emergence of translations and interpretations in an uncontainable third space, whose form and function are both susceptible to "enunciative" processes. If indeed artists were to make the most of the "social interstice", then the conditions of this place must be discussed beyond the defensive confines of art. Following Bhabha, the pluralised interstices of cultural intervention, translation, and innovation make up the activities of the third space. For the "social interstice" to gain greater traction, it must likewise recognise itself as a generative and liminal territory of difference that does not exist independently.

Moreover, the creation of that space must consider not only the blurring boundaries between the two domains of art and life, but the complicated encounter of embodied being as well – typically of people when talking about socially engaged art, but this should not be limited to that. Encounters are

capable of performing situational contradictions, i.e. producing the differences at hand while mitigating them at the same time. Bhabha notably sees this third space as one that also "splits" into multiple subjects, since "[t]he enunciatory moment of multiple belief is both a defence against the anxiety of difference, and itself *productive* of differentiations. Splitting […] is a strategy for articulating contradictory and coeval statements of belief" (Bhabha, 1994, p.188, original emphasis). The third space of cultural hybridity thus hinges upon this ambivalence of negotiation. While Bhabha's reflections are concerned with cultural intertextuality on a broader scale, I would like to situate this within embodied relations that are more specific to the art practices of this study. What would it mean, then, for living, breathing enactments to be open to appropriation and translation?

To better articulate the bodily implications and the interstitiality of socially negotiated art, I turn to Judith Butler's examination of embodied consciousness. In an early exploration of ideas that Butler would later call performativity and citationality, "Variations on Sex and Gender" looks at the legacy of Simone de Beauvoir's oft-quoted assertion that one is not born but *becomes* a woman. Part of this involves a re-reading of existentialist choice that, following Sartre, is "existed" (as a transitive verb) through continuous, embodied interpretations (Butler in Salih, 2004). This is the very site of gender creation and subversion, as the binary of man / woman (and its attendant transcendent / corporeal assignations) is variously confirmed, questioned, and mutated through mimicry and repetition. Elaborating upon Beauvoir's formulation, she notes how Sartre's consciousness is embodied –

or rather, how it takes place *as* the body: "the body itself [as] a surpassing" (ibid.). The body is thus transcendent and corporeal in the "choosing" and living out of gender, which is "an *impulsive* yet *mindful* process of interpreting a cultural reality laden with sanctions, taboos, and prescriptions" (ibid.). Neither something one is born into or properly chosen, gender is both a reiteration and reorganisation of behavioural norms. In this way, the embodied processes of bodily becoming coincides with the continuation (of tradition) and innovation (of difference) within Bhabha's third space.

While Butler's transitive, Sartrian "existing" applies specifically to a gendering process that leads to a woman, it sheds light more broadly on the important contradiction that is found in the "impulsive" yet "mindful" mimicry by which a body makes and displaces itself socially. This is in line with the postcolonial border work that Bhabha is concerned with, for both cases insist on a going "beyond" of (normative) conventions in space and time. Interweaving these two perspectives, the potential of the in-between becomes more intimately tied in with the bodily enunciation of subjectivities. In the explicit recalibration of a socially *engaged* to a socially *negotiated* art, I stress such transitive *co*-existing in order to locate what kind of border work is at play in art practices: between bodies of all kinds, including individuals, organisations, localities, and ecosystems that end up in contact (see also: 3.2.2. on the corporeality of space and the making of body borders).

The focus, then, is understanding the innovation of the third space specifically through the experience of encounter. Between Bhabha and Butler, I propose

embodiment as the site of adherence as well as difference-making, which means that bodies can simultaneously submit to and resist the pressures of social norms. Bourriaud's social interstice refracted into this embodied third space would be in the position to challenge the contingent – transitively existed – norms found in the in-between. This can mean, for example, the defamiliarisation of social norms through an "impulsive" and "mindful" making negotiation of relations. As such, the social interstice that artists work within is not necessarily destined to be relational micro-utopias; it is a space wherein propositions are made and responded to in unpredictable ways. It also depends on an active form of co-existing that sustains and destabilises, upholds and reinvents systems of operation. By drawing attention to the possibility of art attuning itself to the complexities of relations as enunciated and embodied, the interstice is no longer the service-providing social glue of Bourriaud's imagination, but a disruptive joint of the third space that questions how structural norms come to be.

1.1.2. The unworked community of Miwon Kwon's community as site-specificity

Examining the proliferation of "site-specificity" in contemporary art, Miwon Kwon questions how the laying bare of production, presentation, and curatorial contexts in "vanguardist, socially conscious and politically committed art practices" have been "domesticated by their assimilation into the dominant culture" (Kwon, 2001, p.1). The purpose of her study is to

reevaluate site-specificity in the more recent phenomenon of "cultural mediation" and its implications on "urban life and urban space" (ibid., p.3). Locating the genesis of *site* in 1960s North American and European art, she proceeds to draw the contours of its metamorphosis from an initially physical, *sedentary* concern of institutional critique to a durational, *nomadic* one, bringing us to contemporary projects that are conducted by mobile artists in localised settings. She cites the restaging of works by artists like Carl Andre and Donald Judd, whose claims of artistic forgery "present an unprecedented strain on established patterns of (re)producing, exhibiting, borrowing / lending, purchasing / selling, and commissioning / executing art works in general" (ibid., p. 43). The immovability of the work became a point against which later artists have variously reacted: authenticity would, instead, be found in nomadic forms.

But Kwon is also critical of the artist as exotic tourist, shedding light on the tension between what she calls "mobilization and specificity" (ibid., p.166). Privileged with the ease of travel and communication, the artist (typically a well-educated temporary incomer with greater cultural capital) is a delegate of an art system that must attend to

> the uneven conditions of adjacencies and distances *between* one thing, one person, one place, one thought, one fragment *next* to another […] so that the sequence of sites that we inhabit in our life's traversal does not become genericized into an undifferentiated serialization, one place *after* another" (Kwon, 2001, p. 166, original emphases).

Her call for a more spatial, situated analysis came just before the term "socially engaged art" gained wider usage. In supporting her theoretical argument that is based on a history of site-specificity, she turns to "community in new genre public art", a formulation that hearkens to artist Suzanne Lacy. Defining new genre public art as "an intensive engagement with the people of the site, involving direct communication and interaction over an extended period of time" (ibid., p.82), Kwon attends to the site-specificity of the community form in the projects of *Culture in Action* (1993), a large-scale exhibition programme held in different locations around Chicago curated by Mary Jane Jacob. Through her observations of the eight projects, she arrives at "four distinct categories" of community at play: *community of mythic unity* is "an abstract projection of commonality" in which an artist's "search for a common denominator" overrides the differences in personal situations (ibid., p.119-20); *sited communities* invite the participation of existing organisations in preconceived projects that have little to do with the participants' lives, i.e. participants "perform a relatively incidental role" under the guidance of both artist and commissioner (ibid., p.124); *invented communities (temporary)* generate short-lived communities that last only as long as the project (ibid., p.126); and *invented communities* (*ongoing)*, on the other hand, have lifespans independent of the project framework and "realistic" – i.e. not "hypothetical" – expectations that have been discussed with the group. These are often led by artists with "home-team advantage" (ibid., p.135), i.e. a "sited insider".

What emerges from Kwon's typological delineation is a triadic relationship between the institution, the artist, and the people who constitute these groups or communities. The dynamic of each model is defined by different degrees of delegation and collaboration that are accompanied by shifting notions of (non-)membership, representation, and ownership. According to Kwon's thinking, these would be further compounded by the instabilities both within the group and the individuals, whose identities are under constant negotiation:

> [Collective artistic praxis] involves a provisional group, produced as a function of specific circumstances instigated by an artist and/or cultural institution, aware of the effects of these circumstances on the very conditions of the interaction, performing its own coming together and coming apart as a necessarily incomplete modeling or working-out of a collective social process. (ibid., p.154)

The four configurations she identifies demonstrate some possible attempts at being a community that are paradoxically undone at the same time. The categories are, therefore, not to be read generally, but are instead localised snapshots pertaining to the "Culture in Action" context from which they were taken. Yet the potentials of an unstable, conflicted, and potentially disobedient "unworked" community — "a community that questions its own legitimacy is legitimate" (ibid., p.155) — is one that warrants greater examination in the context of this study.

The question of self-reflexive legitimacy leads to counterpublics, a concept that queer studies scholar Michael Warner uses to reference bodies that understand themselves to be normatively illegitimate. Proposed in reference to the subcultures that defy heteronormativity, counterpublics are concerned with the socialised implications of "public" and "private" realms as well as the gendering that correlate to them (Warner, 2002). In accordance with the normative conventions of the gender binary, masculinity is assumed to be outward-facing and of the public domain (providing free movement to political subjects and breadwinners) while femininity is, conversely, inward-facing and of the private domain (for exclusively domestic, biologically reproductive subjects). This opposition has been both refuted and reclaimed, not least by the very existence and examinations of spaces organised and frequented specifically by women and queer people as unacknowledged publics. Yet it remains important to note the more insidious blurrings between public and the private domains that demonstrate a different kind of inseparability of the two, e.g. the debate on reproductive rights or the unease associated with public disclosure – outings – with regards to one's gender non-conforming body:

> [W]hile the personal is "political" in a broad sense, state regulation may not always be appropriate. And while the private realm of the home should often be a matter of public care and concern, the market – like the state and like the majoritarian public of the mass media – has its own destructive tendencies and may be a bad model of "the public". (Warner, 2002, p.36)

The political public is thus neither completely outside of or merged with the domestic private, for the difficult relationship between them produces the very contentions that must, in fact, be *made* public – or, as with the embodied third space (see: 1.1.1.), transitively existed. This, however, cannot merely be resolved by state or legal intervention, which suggests the need for structural legitimization (and thus control). While legal recognition is crucial for day-to-day survival, the "unworking" of community is concerned with the slippages between private and public domains as they enunciate a new *counter*public energy. Rather than a unifying "commonness" of being, the "being-in-common" is found in the active articulation of difference as it comes into frictive contact with "the majoritarian public" (Warner, 2002), the latter of which is revealed to be a socially negotiated / disciplined terrain. In what follows, I propose two possibilities of rethinking the counterpublic as a functional unit: in terms of *coherence* and *individuation*. The first proposes a desire for community that results from an embodied sense of loneliness (Bauman, 2000) and the second presents a contrasting notion of multitude, whereby sociality is a necessary process that precedes individuation (Virno, 2004).

Describing the disconnected, hyper-mobile individual of "liquid modernity", Zygmunt Bauman points out that the rising appeal for "communitarianism" is inversely proportional to the loss of security and social institutions: "[T]he volume of individual responsibilities […] grows on a scale unprecedented for the post-war generations" (Bauman, 2000, p.170). He argues that the

"stripped harness[es]" with which communities operate in the present time is the only form they can take, reasoning that "the facility with which they can be put on in the morning and taken off in the evening (or vice versa)" (ibid., p.169) makes belonging flexible. Given how contemporary life is governed by speed, communities that had to be slowly built up are now quickly cobbled together by easily identifiable, common attributes. Whereas they once provided a situated sense of duration and continued belonging, local and social institutions are now lighter than ever. "Community" is a longing in a time of "unstructured, fluid state of the immediate setting of life-politics" (ibid., p.8). The individual's body and assertive "self" serves as the last bastion of security in such a climate. Bauman explains this shift:

> The body and its satisfactions have not become less ephemeral since the time when Durkheim sang the glory of durable social institutions. The snag, though, is that everything else — and those social institutions most prominently — has now become more ephemeral yet than the 'body and its satisfactions'. (ibid., p.183)

In other words, the body is seen as the last safe zone in an environment that has done away with systemic responsibility. This feeling of being unmoored is a crucial addition in the consideration of counterpublics, which is revisited at the end of this analysis. For now, what exactly is "the new loneliness of body and community" (ibid., p.184)? Like Kwon's interpretation of Nancy's "unworking", Bauman recognises in the notion of community "an emergent unity […] which is an outcome, not an a priori given condition, of shared life,

a unity put together through negotiation and reconciliation, not the denial, stifling or smothering out of differences" (ibid., p.178). While Kwon sees in "unworking" an optimistic potential for radical togetherness, Bauman also considers how the contingent communities are a product of uncertain times, the only meaningful togetherness that can cope with "the volatility of identities" (ibid.). To put it differently, he believes that no other community practices are viable today *except* that of the contingent. Yet we cannot help but fret at the exposure of our bodies and long for something to hold on to, for sustained reciprocation, dependence, and roots. That this scenario has been made increasingly impossible everyday only further deepens the body's yearning for community. Therefore, Bauman links the body and the community in their shared fate of loneliness:

> Body and community are the last defensive outposts on the increasingly deserted battlefield on which the war for certainty, security and safety is waged daily with little, if any, respite. They need now to perform the tasks once divided among many bastions and stockades. More depends on them now than they are able to carry, and so they are likely to deepen, rather than to allay, the fears which prompted the seekers of security to run to them-for shelter. (Bauman, 2000, p.184)

The susceptibility of the contemporary body engenders a greater desire for security and protection. This is how Bauman arrives at neo-tribal communities shaped by nationalist tendencies and racist divisions – something he

emphatically situates within the liquifying present. Such belonging latches onto simplistic similarities that "contains just one rubric", e.g. of nationalism. (ibid., p.176; see: 3.2.2. for an elaboration on the affective draw of nationalism).

But this "loneliness" is neither new nor merely in the service of nationalist self-preservation. This positioning of body and community within Bauman's argument of liquid modernity neglects to examine the othering effects of such single-rubric belonging, for nationalist belonging also means xenophobic exclusion and "foreigner" non-members. In other words, these are the bodies that constitute a different, other(ed) "loneliness" with an equally different counterpublic affect. While he notes how a delineation of a nationalist *we* marks out a *they* at the same time (Bauman, 2000, p.176), he fails to look at how this is manifested. The argument here is that there are repercussions that occur in the wake of a generalised "liquid modern" loneliness, ones that are crucial for my refraction here: the loneliness of one group's single-rubric belonging creates *at the same time* their non-belonging groups, and thus other rubrics for counterpublic making. Beyond the precarity of the body as the last safe zone of a neoliberal present, there is the precarity of being marked as a racial, sexual, disabled, etc. other. It is this reverse reading of bodily loneliness that is useful for extending Kwon's unworked community, for the community enabled under something like nationalism *also* gives life to its potential counterpublics. Importantly, this also recalls the ambivalence of the reiterative yet innovative third space (see: 1.1.1.) by showing how an adherence to a normativising convention (of state and race) is also

simultaneously a splitting into new subversive subjectivities.

A counterpoint to thinking about the counterpublic as bodies-drawn-together is the concept of a multitude, which Paolo Virno suggests is a meeting of the many meeting not as an end goal, but as part of an individuation process:

> We could say—with Marx, but against the grain of a large segment of Marxism—that the radical transformation of the present state of things consists in bestowing maximum prominence and maximum value on the existence of every single member of the species […]. Marx's theory could (or rather should) be understood, today, as a realistic and complex theory of the individual, as a rigorous individualism: thus, as a theory of individuation. (Virno, 2004, p.80)

For Virno, social relations therefore function as a site as well as a means for the performative negotiation of a "pre-individual reality" (ibid.). However, by inverting the goal of coming-together (community) into a radical going-asunder (multitude), Virno leads to the real crux of his argument which concerns the mining of our innate social capacity within post-Fordist capitalism (ibid., p.83). He identifies a "society of labour", wherein our time with friends and family – or "social time" – has "come unhinged because there is no longer anything which distinguishes labor from the rest of human activities" (ibid., 102). This is something he reiterates as a point of caution, given how examinations of community typically assume a magnetism that brings a group together (even if only momentarily and problematically) rather

than the enunciation of an individual from the many. Indeed, the multitude shuns everything that the politically unified, state-based "people" stands for. It also throws into question the very notions of public and private, critiquing in particular the political left's tendency to turn the latter into an issue of "deprivation" (ibid., p.24). By questioning the presupposition that the individual is powerlessly set adrift, he spins into perspective a sociality that is related to an individual-in-the-making. This is a relevant point that challenges what it means to be on one's own, because the potential forces that set an individual apart from the many can constitute new rules for the social, leaving behind current disciplinary governmentalities. As such, Virno's individualisation gives pause to the way an individual is seen as untethered, left alone.

But as Antonio Negri reminds us in his reflections on the multitude, its sense of self and its constitutive bodily singularities "[do] not exist except in relation to the other", for "[t]here is no possibility for a body of being alone" (Negri, 2008, p.120). The emphasis, then, is on bodies that are enunciated *from* the multitude, which returns us to sociality as the site of contention. Though Bauman and Virno offer different ways of rethinking community, neither seems particularly interested in locating their respective theory within lived experience. What happens, for instance, when different lonely bodies encounter one another on a daily basis? Or if we were to take Virno's argument – that social relations are a prelude to an unending process of individuation – where can we find them? Publics shift, appear into and disappear from view, and are sometimes so transient that they are not seen

as one, e.g. bus passengers, pedestrians on a street, museum visitors, hospital patients, etc. I draw attention to these prosaic forms not to suggest that their seemingly random and spontaneous gathering are necessarily of artistic or political consequence, but to re-materialise other "contingent" circumstances in which bodies actually meet. Where do our bodies linger, where do they hurry by? The weight of impressions and the trajectories of our bodies provide important situated cues to supplement the frameworks of contingent community and multitude. Returning to Warner, he emphasises the looseness of publics generated "through mere attention" or "stranger sociability", which requires the minimal awareness and proximity to a public discourse, e.g. an unplanned incident, an audible speech, etc.:

> It promises to address anybody. It commits itself in principle to the possible participation of any stranger. […] The projective character of public discourse, in which each characterization of the circulatory path becomes material for new estrangements and re-characterizations, is an engine for (not necessarily progressive) social mutation. (Warner, 2002, p.113)

These "estrangements" are not euphemistically equated to progressive worldmaking, but highlighted as potential moments in which interventions of (counter)publicness can be made. To situate what he means: the pervasive call for heteronormativity, for a gay, white man like Warner, is an instance of what he calls "the projective character of public discourse". Its effects are felt daily on queer bodies that are subsequently estranged in more or less

aggressive ways. Warner cites the eighteenth century group of gender-bending men, the She-Romps (ibid., p.109), as a historical example of a counterpublic forming around a specific estrangement of gender non-conformity, one that finds its embodied realisation (and co-recognition) in a cluster of similarly othered bodies. This goes to show that loneliness as a response to the absence of social support is not as new as Bauman posits, and is certainly not unique to this "liquid modernity". While the generalised bodies of his analysis may feel "a new loneliness" (Bauman, 2000, p.184) by the breakdown of social institutions, this sense of loss or loneliness is a significant part of the histories of counterpublic struggles.

In reading beside Kwon's thoughts on communities that question themselves, I arrive at a formulation of counterpublics and lonely, othered bodies that are produced in maladjustment to social norms. I would like to stress again that the embodiment of loneliness needs to look more closely at the situated effects of neoliberal precarity, beyond even sex, gender, and race in a recommitment to bodies "outside the boundaries of sanctioned time and space, legal status, citizen-subjecthood" (Eng, Halberstam and Muñoz in Eng, 2005, p.13). This is because neither a liquid, contingent community nor a self-fulfilling individuation heed their actual repercussions; the "one rubric" of Bauman's nationalist belonging, as it has been argued, also engenders multiple differences around which counterpublics form. These, in turn, complicate how the body, community, as well as individuation function as premises for reflecting upon the social. Bodies marked as different also experience different valences of precarity, and the multitude still needs to

concentrate on the social as the conditions for individualization. In line with Eng et al. (2005), queerness in its broadest sense has the capacity to remind us of the bodies that are unaccounted for, and this is especially relevant in situations that summon the spirit of community.

To take seriously the marginalisation of race, sex, gender, disability, etc. means looking at how counterpublic belonging is negotiated in real time and space. For context, an anti-trans lesbian group "Get the L Out" led the Pride in London march in 2018 for much of the time and organisers felt unable to stop them as they handed out flyers to the crowd (Dommu, 2018). In pushing hard for inclusivity, diversity, and exuberance, what is overlooked? Pride in London issued at least two different apologies in which they attempted to explain their lack of action. Of note is the earlier one in which a spokesperson provided specific statistics from the organisation's "Pride Matters" report, including how 24% of the LGBTQ+ respondents saw the event as a "protest" (ibid.). Implicit was that "Get the L Out" had the right to do what they did, as Pride is perceived to be a protest platform for LGBTQ+ issues; their other apology cited "hot weather" and safety as reasons for not intervening. Caught in a muddle of apology and defence, the spokesperson showed how supposed counterpublic organising just as easily fumbles at the intersection of trans awareness, lesbian separatism, law, and public display. For socially engaged art practices that are positioned within or beside counterpublics, they can easily find themselves in similar predicaments where poor decisions need to be addressed. A socially *negotiated* art therefore emphasises a self-reflexive rigour that takes stock of the bodies, relations, and interests it is most

accountable for. Art workers must learn to continually attune, abandon, and re-attune to the bodies and connections around us in order to recognise who "we" are in relation to others, which also means accounting for who we do not – and cannot – include.

1.1.3. Empathetic insights of Grant Kester's dialogical aesthetics

The third theory of socially engaged art I turn to is Grant Kester's dialogical aesthetics, which appears in his 2004 publication "Conversation Pieces". He focuses on dialogue as a site of aesthetic experience by positioning it as a radical departure from the avant-garde lineage of "semantic labour" (Kester, 2004). Through a discursive experience of shared intersubjectivity, he directly challenges the individual aesthetic experience which, in its opacity and insularity, means to counteract the "malevolent other (kitsch, mass culture, etc.) that threatens to destroy or compromise [art] in some way" (Kester, 2004, p.30). In his argument, dialogical art practices are grounded within idiosyncratic patterns of speaking and listening that are defined through

> a complex process of political self-definition. [They] unfold against the backdrop of collective modes of oppression (racism, sexism, class oppression, etc.) but also within a set of shared cultural and discursive traditions. (ibid., p.150)

His intention to theorise art practices from a more situated perspective is something this study also seeks to achieve. Yet Kester's approach differs in his attempt to position dialogical aesthetics within as well as away from a larger avant-garde legacy. This is something that his critics have addressed in different ways, from his neglecting the revolutionary history that is part of the avant-garde (Léger, 2007, p.41-42; see also: 1.1.6. for Léger's psychoanalytical approach to avant-garde art practices) to his downplaying of aesthetic criteria as part of the process. One of his more prominent critics is Claire Bishop, whose analysis of participatory art based on aesthetic negation is something this study also looks into (see: 1.1.4.).

Much of the criticism against Kester stems from his attempt to present dialogical art practices as socially oriented, which he puts in distinction to the supposed insularity of avant-garde art practices. The latter, he argues, takes into account the aesthetic "emancipatory communication" (Kester, 2004, p.29) of a singular viewer. His account of dialogical aesthetics is therefore positioned as a departure of this approach rather than a continuation of it; in so doing, he is also seen to undermine the political project of avant-garde art. His is a difficult claim to defend, because Kester's dialogical aesthetics is not only a break from the avant-garde, but pronounces an intersubjectivity that is the site of this art form's political meaning-making. Even as he concludes that dialogical aesthetics "is part of a more venerable tradition of self-critique within the history of modernism" (ibid., p.188), his project is undeniably built out of its supposed political obsolescence, resulting in a great deal of theoretical backlash. The point of bringing up the criticism is to demonstrate

the ways in which art theorists have attempted to define practices in line with (or against the grain of) lineages, reshaping the latter in the process. Part of what this study seeks to do is to rethink what it means to contribute to these lineages – or narratives – which, in this case, looks at the practices for what they do without pledging its exact location in the art and social entanglement. Recalling Bhabha's enunciated reinvention of tradition (see: 1.1.1.), this study is invested in the ambivalent potential of cultural articulation that elides definitions of the artistic as well as the social. As such, Kester's exploration of *how* his dialogical aesthetics takes place is of greater salience.

Referencing feminist studies on "active listening" via Gemma Corradi Fiumara and "procedural" ways of knowing via Mary Field Belenky, Kester homes in on a horizontality that takes place between speakers and listeners, extending to artists and collaborators. For Kester, the possibility of art's autonomy is put to test in these encounters, because in the midst of creating new understandings, dialogical artists must be "defined in terms of openness, of listening, and of a willingness to accept a position of dependence and intersubjective vulnerability relative to the viewer or collaborator" (Kester, 2004, p.110).

Kester builds his case for dialogical aesthetics partly around the socially and discursively constructed identity in Habermas's ideal speech situation. In doing so, he critiques the latter's reliance on "ontologically stable agents", who are capable of "bracketing" their material differences as they take part and debate in the public sphere (ibid., 109-113). In response to that, he

advocates a more empathetic communication:

> It is through empathy that we learn not simply to suppress self-interest through identification with some putatively universal perspective, or through the irresistible compulsion of logical argument, but literally to redefine self: to both know and feel our connectedness with others. (ibid., p.114)

He argues for an "empathetic insight" that is achieved by imagining and "approximat[ing]" another person's subject position, though he cautions the "arrogance of speaking for others" (ibid., p.115). While Kester turns briefly to Bakhtin's "dialogical situation" and Levinas's "responsibility" to underpin what he means by empathetic insight (ibid., p.120), he ultimately returns to specific practices in order to illustrate the "cumulatively experienced transformation passing through phases of coherence, vulnerability, dissolution, and recoherence" (ibid.). Yet the experience of imagining or confronting the experience of another remains underexplored in his argument. What I would like to carry through are the terms he highlights above – coherence, vulnerability, dissolution and recoherence – which gives shape to the relational textures and affects of "empathetic insights".

The task here is to formulate a meaningful approach that accounts for the desire to feel and/or understand the position of another in a different and more precise way. In the published correspondence between Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou (2013), they re-examine the term "dispossession" by

problematising its straight-forward association with extreme privatisation and growing precarity: social institutions are disappearing as systems of state and public support morph into privately run, profit-driven services. This leads to an increasingly vigilant guarding of our assets as well as subject positions, which the two theorists seek to challenge through a critical deployment of dispossession. There is a conscious interplay of double meanings in Butler's and Athanasiou's analysis:

> We recognized that both of us thought that ethical and political responsibility emerges only when a sovereign and unitary subject can be effectively challenged, and that the fissuring of the subject, or its constituting "difference," proves central for a politics that challenges both property and sovereignty in specific ways. Yet as much as we prize the forms of responsibility and resistance that emerge from a "dispossessed" subject – one that *avows* the differentiated social bonds by which it is constituted and to which it is obligated – we also were keenly aware that dispossession constitutes a form of suffering for those displaced and colonized and so could not remain an unambivalent political ideal. We started to think together about how to formulate a theory of political performativity that could take into account the version of dispossession that we valued as well as the version we oppose. (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p.ix-x)

The "sovereignty" of "self-poietics" concerns, for Butler and Athanasiou, the struggle of self with and against norms as well as alterity. As a concept,

"sovereignty" has been extensively explored, more notably as the decision-making that creates an exception in the order of the law (Schmitt, 2010) and as the creation of political life that structures the chaos of bare life (Agamben, 1998) amongst other theories. More recently, Wendy Brown points to the fiction of political sovereignty that is only given credence through "theatricalized and spectacularized performance" practices such as "walling" (Brown, 2010). A similar understanding of sovereignty-in-practice is found in Butler and Athanasiou, with the self and subjectivity as sites. Indeed, they reflect on the impossibility of enclosing one's self by looking at its socially and politically regulated emergence. Rather than submit to a defensive position of the bounded and limited body that puts sovereignty into practice, Athanasiou argues that the "self"

> does not refer to an autological and self-contained individuality, but rather to responsive dispositions toward becoming-with-one-another, as they are manifested, for example, in the various affects that throw us 'out of joint' and 'beside ourselves,' such as indignation, despair, desire, outrage, and hope. These are all affective dispositions that are 'owned' not only by ourselves (if, in fact, it can ever be claimed that they can be assumed as 'one's own'), but by others as well. (Athanasiou in Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p.71)

The self thrown "out of joint" is a sense of bodily and subjective dispossession that can also be found in this study's later examination on orientation and the difficulties of being properly aligned (see: 1.1.6.). Responding to Athanasiou,

Butler analyses our belonging to others by posing a deceptively straightforward question, "who are you?" (Butler in Butler and Athanasiou., p.73). The ways in which it is asked, however, betray any number of (dis)possessed corporealities, for the question can be posed reflexively ("who are you, this body I inhabit?") or to a situation outside of oneself, amongst other ways. By asking "who are you?", the contours of the self and the social are drafted and redrafted. This negotiation is relentless and takes place within "a normative horizon" that, following Foucault, "determine[s] who can and cannot be an intelligible subject" (ibid., p.67).

As a result, "who are you" is a crucial question in tackling how one might feel for another, or socially. But who asks, who responds, and what is their answer? These are negotiated by the body in terms of how it enacts a subjective position within the world and vice versa. Specifically, how exactly is a body thrown "out of joint" or "made intelligible"? Butler returns the reader to the scene in which Fanon is seen by a French boy. "Look, a negro!" he points and exclaims. The question, "who are you?" reverberates here in a number of ways, including: 1. the boy answers his own question of who Fanon is, reducing him to a spectacle of racial otherness; 2. Fanon asks himself who he is in the eyes of the boy; 3. Fanon asks who the boy is as a response to the latter's remark.

As the body learns its limits within the world, so too does it come to surpass them (see: 1.1.1. on the existing of gender). To this end, Butler sees the question "who are you?" as an act of self-interrogation, as if one is speaking

to another "that emerges from the resources of the body". Reappropriating Fanon, she refers to this appellation as "*o you, o my body*" in order to reinforce the social agency of the body, for it "becomes the 'you' at the same time as the world of others becomes the 'you.'" (Butler in Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p.81). This is a moment when dispossession can be seen to split, simultaneously disciplining and crafting the body. In refracting Kester's empathetic insight into an embodied and socially negotiated dispossession, I focus on the emergent potential that recalibrates self, subjectivities, and relations.

However, the struggle against sovereignty and the identities that regulate it can sometimes lead to horrific forms of dispossession. For example, Jasbir Puar describes the body of a suicide bomber as one that is "transformed into a weapon, not in a metaphorical sense but in a truly ballistic sense" (Puar, 2005, p.129). No longer the last safe zone (Bauman, 2000; see: 1.1.2.), the body is now literally explosive:

> Temporal narratives of progression are upturned as death and becoming fuse into one: as one's body dies, one's body becomes the mask, the weapon, the suicide bomber, not before. […] The body-weapon does not play as metaphor, or in the realm of meaning and epistemology, but rather forces us ontologically anew to ask: what kinds of information does the ballistic body impart? (Puar, 2005, p.129)

In this interval before the dust settles, the carnage sends out intensities that

fail to come together cognitively but nevertheless constitute the foundation for fleeting situated knowledges, what Puar calls "queer assemblages". The ballistic body is capable of "scrambling the terrain of the political" (ibid., p.136), making nonsense out of self and other, dispossession and sovereignty. It is a total disintegration, for "[t]he dispersion of the boundaries of bodies forces a completely chaotic challenge to normative conventions of gender, sexuality, and race, disobeying normative conventions of 'appropriate' bodily practices and the sanctity of the able body" (ibid., p.131).

As such, Puar's depiction of suicide bombing helps to critique and situate the double edges of dispossession. On the one hand, the loss of bodily self has been taken to its fullest consequence, resulting in its annihilation as well as everything that it was defined by. On the other, the explosion not only "throws [things] out of joint" (Athanasiou in Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p.71), but completely "scrambles" the correlations with regards to bonds, terror, and identities into "unknowable" queer assemblages. This suggests that subjective dispossession is limited, for there is a point where the social can feel "unknowable" even as the affective repercussions in this space is keenly felt.

In closing, I turn to a video work by The Atlas Group called *The Bachar Tapes* (2000). While this piece is not a "socially engaged" art project – there is no explicit group process shown – it does imply an extremely close and confidential negotiation with one sole collaborator. As with most work by The Atlas Group, there is much to speculate: under what circumstances did they

meet? How did they work out the process? Is the collaborator even real? Most relevantly here, however, is the narrated depiction of an event, which involves violent forms of othering. The video shows a man sitting in a bare room talking to the camera about the 1985 "Western Hostage Crisis" in Lebanon, wherein five white American men were taken captive and he, a Lebanese man, was the sixth. The American hostages returned home after their release, and all went on to publish books about their experience. Invited by The Atlas Group, the sole Lebanese hostage Souheil Bachar purportedly made a total of 53 videos that detailed his time in captivity. Of all the recordings, he has apparently authorised only two to be shown outside of his home country. In this particular one, he describes the captives' anxiety and the (sexual) aggression he experienced directly to the viewer:

> David would get very angry if Terry's feet touch his. They would come up with the strangest ideas to make sure that their bodies did not touch. After a few weeks, all this changed. No one seemed to care anymore. But they had a different relation to me from the beginning. They were clearly disgusted with my body. But they touched me all the time. I remember one night in particular, one very hot summer night when the room was filled with our stench. As usual, we were all on the floor sleeping. Or trying to sleep. I felt someone's ass rubbing against my crotch. Someone was rubbing himself on me. I became hard and I don't know why, but I pressed myself against his ass. It felt good. Seconds later, he punched me in the groin, as if my hard-on had provoked him. I stayed quiet. (Atlas Group, 2000)

Following Puar, the assault was enabled by the normativising power of stabilised identity frameworks that not only etch Bachar's body with differences — "they were clearly disgusted with my body" — but turn it into the site of disciplinary reterritorialisation (Puar, 2007, p.158). As an artwork, his re-telling depicts a particularly desperate situation in which dispossession is happening in two bleak ways: as attempted rape and as a subjective undoing of the victim. Firstly, the rub of the man's rear-end in the darkness of the cell violently parallels (and exceeds) the pointing finger in Fanon's narrative to not only exclaim at Bachar's otherness, but to take it by force. Secondly, the victim responds surprisingly and queerly, with a conflicted openness that he fails to explain — "I became hard and don't know why". Of course, it must be emphasised that I am not presenting Bachar's reaction as exemplary, nor am I suggesting submissive reciprocation as a survival tactic. What is crucial here, however, is how the second mode of dispossession can be seen as his self-weaponising in a way that *occurs* to him, rather than a conscious act like that of the suicide bomber's. Refracting Butler's "who are you?", Bachar's queer desire paradoxically confronts his rapist — his racial power, heterosexuality, and sovereignty. Unintelligibility has become a queer assemblage that questions back, scrambling the scene. The rapist's intention has also been dispossessed and he retreats.

Bachar's and Fanon's experiences of racialised and/or sexualised subordination provides some important groundwork for articulating the textures of dispossession, an idea used here to refract Kester's empathetic

insight. As discussed, his examination points to some of its most crucial affective stages – "coherence, vulnerability, dissolution, and recoherence" (Kester, 2004, p.121) – but does not examine the complexities of the process. And while dialogical art "facilitates a reciprocal exchange that allows us to think outside our own lived experience and establish a more compassionate relationship with others" (ibid., p.150), he notes how difficult and problematic this becomes the further the artist travels. What is exposed in dispossession is the inescapability of the social, which posits existing contact between bodies and contexts. But this is complicated by one's position with relation to complicity of power and security structures. This is, in the end, the queerness of dispossession; it opens up relations at the same time as being restricted by them. If dispossession is to critically challenge empathy by the "scrambling" of norms in self-poietics, it must tune into the ways that affects make – or fail to make – meaningful connections. Within the context of art practices, dispossession is nonetheless in a better position to question the limits as well as the possibilities of the social. Rather than aiming for a horizontal reciprocity, the focus is on emergent experiences of the in-between space and how they reverberate back into bodies and situations.

1.1.4. Artistic antagonism of Claire Bishop's participatory art

Following the publication of Kester's "Conversation Pieces", Claire Bishop wrote an article about the "social turn" in contemporary art for Artforum (Bishop, 2006b). In an effort to theorise the use of social situations within the

context of art, she challenges the political correctness of "interventionist, activist and socially engaged art" while recuperating the aesthetic evaluation of these practices, an argument she fleshes out more extensively in her publication "Artificial Hells" (2012). An important note here is her adaptation of the term "participatory art" throughout the text, which is commonly used by cultural organisations working with defined groups of people. By the 1990s, the community arts of the 1970s and 1980s that had grown out of a cultural democracy movement was tapering off due to its waning political momentum (Hope, 2011). One of its unintended legacies was to provide a model for "individual-focused arts programmes supported by public funds in the UK today" (Matarasso, 2013, p.2), which many grants-giving organisations refer to as "participatory" arts. Bishop's usage of "participatory", however, is a deliberate move against the notion of *socially engaged*, to which she asks, "what artist *isn't* socially engaged? Her book is therefore organised around a definition of participation in which "people constitute the central artistic medium and material, in the manner of theatre and performance" (Bishop, 2012, p.2). In moving away from social engagement, Bishop intends to reconsider participatory practices within an aesthetic framework.

In "Artificial Hells", she presents a historical timeline of such a participatory art, the appearance of which is linked to different moments of political upheaval. Despite grouping a wide selection of projects around three pivotal moments in twentieth century history from Europe and South America, she is critical about the collapsing distance between art and life. She turns to

Jacques Rancière's theory of the aesthetic regime in particular to reinforce her scepticism of "well-meaning advocates of socially collaborative art" (ibid., p.25):

> In insisting upon consensual dialogue, sensitivity to difference risks becoming a new kind of repressive norm – one in which artistic strategies of disruption, intervention or over-identification are immediately ruled out as "unethical" because all forms of authorship are equated with authority and indicted as totalising. (ibid.)

She seeks to clarify the critical and political role of art without imposing upon it the responsibility to be socially efficacious, admitting that "we [of the art world] need to support the progressive transformation of existing institutions […] whose boldness is related to (and at times greater than) that of artistic imagination" (ibid., p.284). For Bishop, many artists working in the social realm are reluctant to deal with aesthetic, historically avant-garde concerns that foreground negation and antagonism, preferring instead to offer platforms for convivial exchange. She argues that they have carved out an impossible position in being tethered to a history of artistic dematerialisation and performance, while claiming at the same time not to be making art; Turkish artist group Oda Projesi, for instance, consider aesthetics to be "'a dangerous word' that should not be brought into discussion", because their goal is to create "dynamic and sustained relationships" (ibid., p.21). The problem for Bishop, then, is when ethics are brought in as means of assessing art. As such, "art enters a realm of useful, ameliorative and ultimately modest

gestures, rather than the creation of singular acts that leave behind them a troubling wake" (ibid., p.23).

In pointing to the slippage between art and life, especially the subsumption of art under ethics, Bishop highlights the debate that surrounds the critical role of art within life. By this, she appears to include everything from day-to-day encounters to political movements. Given the loss of systemic support and the pervasiveness of ethical consumerism and neoliberal voluntarism, Bishop's critique of the altruism that underpins many socially engaged practices is not at all unreasonable. Art projects are often included as part of market and state aligned urban renewal schemes that promote a sense of well-being, of improvement. To combat what, in her view, is the ubiquity of earnest and conciliatory art practices, she turns to the exploitative (Sierra's *250cm Line Tattooed on 6 Paid People*, 1999), antagonistic (Schlingensief's *Please Love Austria*, 2000), and contradictory (Hirschhorn's *The Bijlmer-Spinoza Festival*, 2009) capacities of art. Bishop presents some key aesthetic approaches of de-alienation by emphasising the artist's determinative role of the process, responsible as she (the artist) is for coming up with the terms by which the participants are expected to behave. In arguing for the artist as author seeking to make her mark – in this case, through the *medium* of people – Bishop is clear. That may very well be the point for some of the artists mentioned above, as the tension of exploitation makes up a significant part of their practice. Particularly in Sierra's case, the subjects are paid to be permanently tattooed by artistic desire. Thus, the murkiness of participation rears its head through the question of consent: to what extent do the

participants of this piece agree to becoming Sierra's medium? While deliberately hovering at the edges of such a permission, does it (not) matter that he draws the sinister tension for his work from bodies with real traces of suffering?

The gap in Bishop's antagonistic aesthetics lies in her dismissal of the unpredictable, multilayered dynamics between bodies that artists working in the social realm are, in fact, looking to explore. Art critics from Josephine Berry Slater to Morgan Quaintance critique this as neglectful of "a politics of the subject" (Berry Slater, 2013) and that "using human beings as medium and material rings alarm bells because people are complex thinking and feeling beings" (Quaintance, 2012). Despite it being a valid endeavour, putting bodies within prescribed conflict situations is equally (if not primarily) a series of ethical decisions. So if part of the artistic process involves experimenting with new and potentially uncomfortable social paradigms and the re-negotiation of bodies and perspectives, what specific skills and sensitivities would the artist need to exhibit? In emphasising the "troubling" antagonism of participatory art, Bishop correlatively downplays the intricacies of relations, viewing them as an ethical duty that compromises – rather than enhances – artistic imagination.

Given its vital position in collaborative work, negotiation is under-problematised as fraught and difficult. Bishop's insistence that "participatory" works be assessed as art alone is symptomatic of the desire to protect the autonomy that keeps art, in her words, "at one remove" from life (Bishop,

2012, p.199), which then overlooks the potential of emergent socio-aesthetic possibilities that exist in between. As such, it is less about the banishment of ethics in the name of critical aesthetic distance than it is about taking seriously the porosity between art and life, i.e. how is this surface-border continually challenged and what is going on when we work with others? Claire Doherty, who founded and until recently directed the public art commissioning organisation Situations in Bristol, UK, asks in her June 2014 talk at KORO (Public Art Norway), "what is the artist's role in allowing something to happen?" and "how does [the practice] change the nature of the place? How does it unsettle the space?" (Doherty, 2014) These are questions that no longer position the art or the artist at the centre of a practice, but as a co-existing element – indeed, an affective nodal point, alongside Ahmed (2004) – in a situation amongst other bodies.

Socially "engaged" art is replete with difficult relations, the most obvious of which concerns the artist and her collaborators. Of course, this extends to include relations between artist and commissioners, commissioners and collaborators, not forgetting the histories, cultures, and other specificities of place that a project calls up. That these are not examined by art theories as embodied processes means the very criticality of the work – the working out and feeling through bodies and contexts – goes missing. The focus, crucially, should extend beyond making a project legible to art historical reflection – e.g. the examination of form, medium, etc. as suggested by Bishop. Instead, a recognition of an art project's relational processes would help recalibrate what is at stake, namely the in-between negotiations that displace the

certainty of the artwork. It is therefore necessary to stress making, maintenance, and critique of this co-generated space as the artist's most important (and unrecognised) socio-aesthetic task.

Part of the labour involves challenging the containment of the self (see: dispossession in 1.1.3.), and with that, the idea that we are separate entities at all that "come together". A focus on embodied relations means attending to their living materiality, giving it the ability to know or to reflect in its own way. Certain feminist thinkers of new materialism, the most prominent of which is Karen Barad, posit an agency of matter that is significant here. Her perspective provides some significant insight into understanding how matter (and the world as such) exerts itself as we make different attempts to encapsulate it as knowledge. As such, Barad's "intra-active" reconsideration of discourse and material sheds light on how embodied negotiations both exceed and limit our understanding of relations. While a "usual 'interaction' […] presumes the prior existence of independent entities/relata" (Barad, 2003, p.815), she proposes instead an intra-action to question the extent to which physical bodies are separate, if at all. This means enmeshing discursivity within materiality and vice versa, producing a "material-discursive" paradigm that is in constant flux; knowledge and the world are thus seen as taking place, not as things. They cannot be forced through filters of representation, but rather come to find their shape, form, and embodiment through enactments. It is a kind of performativity that,

> properly construed, is not an invitation to turn everything (including

> material bodies) into words; on the contrary, performativity is precisely a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real. (ibid., p.802)

The critical engagement of Barad's intra-action in phenomena opens up new kinds of materiality and agency. Via her thinking, a socially *negotiated* art would be centred around the material-discursivity of relations and thus the agency of embodiment and experience. In presenting an "ethico-onto-epistem-ology" (Barad, 2007, p.89) where there is no prior separation between ethics, matter, and knowledge, she locates a much more inter/intrawoven connection of what she calls "phenomena". Boundaries are then performatively differentiated by "agential cuts", enabling the appearance of "components" (ibid., p.335):

> [T]he relationship of the cultural and the natural is a relation of "exteriority within." *This is not a static relationality but a doing — the enactment of boundaries* — that always entails constitutive exclusions and therefore requisite questions of accountability. (ibid., my emphasis)

Enactment turns agency from a fixed attribute into an emergent articulation, with resulting part – components – that are brought into sharper focus (Barad, 2003, p.815). The boundaries of bodies, subjectivities, and individual aspects of the world, therefore, are negotiated out of materialist-discursive practices. Sceptical of the representations that keep "things" (passively) apart

from the "words" that (actively) speak for them, Barad opts for an "agential realist ontology" that considers phenomena ("relations rather than 'things'") and configurations ("discursive practices / (con)figurations rather than 'words'") through the material (ibid., p.814).

In proposing socially engaged / negotiated art as a material-discursive practice, we need to refract tendencies to think of it simply as the purposeful coming-together of individual bodies. This also reinforces the study's focus on embodiment and affect as productive, self-determining forces that emerge through contact, or what Barad calls "the iterative differentiatings of spacetimemattering" (Barad, 2007, p.179), wherein the three ostensibly separate dimensions of space, time, and matter are much more intertwined. In this, she is indebted to Niels Bohr's research in atomic physics, which posits an "inseparability of 'observed object' and 'agencies of observation'" (Bohr cited in Barad, 2003, p.814). Given her own background in theoretical physics, her analysis of entanglement – especially of phenomena and apparatus – is clearly influenced by his work. Elaborating upon his insight, she understands apparatuses not merely as "human-constructed laboratory instruments that tell us how the world is" but as "specific material configurations (dynamic reconfigurings) of the world that play a role in the production of phenomena" (Barad, 2007, p.335). This enlarges the significance of apparatuses to include not only the scientific tools used but the environment within which the study takes place: the atmospheric conditions of the lab, the researcher's affective disposition, etc. The moment phenomena is divided into smaller, specific premises is also the moment we determine the

frameworks within which they make sense.

Yet Barad's "ethico-onto-epistem-ology" has faced the criticism of dissolution and generality, since her argument for intra-acting phenomena risks neglecting how creatures endure and what their "relative pre-existence" might mean "with respect to [new relations]" (Savransky, 2016). Her critics take issue with the generality of phenomena as the primary unit of relations, from which "relata" are produced impermanently. This makes it difficult, sociologist Martin Savransky's cautions, to consider the localised, material limitations that define the possible "becoming[s] of a phenomenon" (ibid.). To illustrate this, he hearkens to a scene in which an old, brown-skinned man is injured in a traffic accident. Witnesses come forward from every which way, "mobilizing physics, engineering, law, environmentalism, psychology, economics, and racism" to "[construct] multiple versions of the event" (ibid.). The concern is that, in emphasising the emergence of matter and knowledge from indivisible and therefore unsituated phenomena, the old man cannot exert the set of relations most relevant and pertinent to him; or the old man as "society", following Savransky, remains unseen as he is wheeled away as an old, brown-skinned man, battered by reductive rubrics of identity. Crucially, this example warns how an overemphasis of emergent relations can also turn into dissociation and/or simplification, like when they all meet at the scene of the traffic accident. He therefore argues for a greater precision in Barad's relational project, as "the challenge of becoming response-able to the becoming of such a phenomenon is that of affirming the adventure of the old man as a society capable of enduring" (ibid.). This caution to endure is a

useful addition to Barad's agential material-discursivity, which is otherwise an important theoretical move away from a thought and matter divide. But "endure" can take on a *spatial* as well as temporal emphasis, which would ask a different question of bodies: how do they absorb and move on from, indeed physically endure, the over-eager movement of phenomena? It is an eerie coincidence that the man of the car accident so closely embodies the figure of Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality (1991) as he lies injured in the middle of the road. In this light, he might be also be seen as an actual, physical blockage to the seemingly frictionless flow of relata (see later: 3.2.2. on the corporeality of space and the bodily feeling of intrusion).

This is why Barad's argument is as confounding as it is enabling, because the framework she offers suggests that the attempt to describe things is concurrent with its remaking. As a result, these are seen as "cuts" happening within a larger mass, not rubbing points of contact. But this is also where her thinking is most brazen and affirmative. Material-discursivity insists on socially negotiated reinvention and as such, the artist, collaborator, context, and artwork are just some of the apparatuses of an art project that are reconfigured – with the added consideration to their enduring relations that already position them somewhere in the world. In applying her "diffractive reading" (Barad, 2007) that accounts for the queer behaviours of wave-like optics to disrupt reflective reading and its directly correlative optics, art practices of the social realm can flourish in the "inseparability of 'observed object' and 'agencies of observation'" that Niels Bohr describes. Both refuting and exceeding claims that merge art with aspects of life, a socially *negotiated*

art departs from a socially *engaged* art by understanding its potential to propose new parts out of a whole and with them, new "apparatuses" that will shape meaning in as yet unforeseeable ways. Together with dispossession (see: 1.1.3.), counterpublic belonging (see: 1.1.2.), and third space enunciations (see: 1.1.1.), this research is slowly forging a path towards a more embodied theorisation for a socially negotiated art, one that heeds the shifting articulations of who and where we are. There is an ongoing need to rework art's agency into something more expansive, which material-discursivity is in the position to do; it foregrounds the enactment of relations over the intersection of separate parts and bodies, of art and life, artist and participant, etc. Barad's thinking shakes up the obstinate self-sufficiency of bounded subjects, spaces, and temporalities, thus foregrounding the actively emergent dimension of a socially negotiated art. Rather than limit the discussion to the antagonistic merits of a participatory art that treat bodies as a matter of form, there would be a perspective and language developed around the negotiation of relations. We need to pay greater attention to processes of differentiation, to the conditionality of self, other, and (not) belonging. As this thesis unfolds, it comes to articulate the very push and pull — what I eventually call the frictive — of the in-between as the generated material of a socially negotiated art.

1.1.5. Failure as the byproduct of Gerald Raunig's concatenating art and revolution machines

The final two points of this chapter's art theoretical overview focus specifically

on the political agency of some socially engaged / negotiated art forms. This concerns artwork and theories that deal explicitly with art's critical potential in politics. In the following two sections, the theories under examination turn to forms of art that break away from the intersubjective notions behind "negotiated" processes to assertive declarations that are not only subversive but overtly oppositional.

This examination looks at Gerald Raunig's "Art and Revolution" (2007), which explores the "concatenations" between art and revolutionary "machines". For him, the meeting of the two is characterised by instability and impermanence; whatever happens depends on the conditions of the two. By insisting that art and politics remain as separate zones means that they only ever meet temporarily – never fusing – to engage in a process of "revolutionary becoming" (Raunig, 2007, p.204). One of his stated goals is to counter the large political ruptures of the short twentieth century with more incremental, molecular events of the long twentieth century (ibid., p.20). As such, his theory is rooted in "a post-structuralist theory of revolution" in order to "illuminat[e] the other pole" (ibid., p.24). To do so, he re-reads Deleuze and Guattari's Foucauldian notion of "transversality", which describes relations in terms of diagonal movements *across* a non-hierarchical space-time continuum:

> Contrary to models of totally diffusing and confusing art and life, this book investigates other practices, those emerging in neighboring zones, in which transitions, overlaps and concatenations of art and

> revolution become possible for a limited time, but without synthesis and identification. […] The way and the extent to which revolutionary machines and art machines work as parts, cogs of one another is the most important subject of investigation in this book. (ibid., p.17-18)

He problematises the "one dimensional constraint of the revolution to a single point" (ibid., p.27), suggesting that the "Marxist-Leninist discourse" posits a "temporal sequence" with one step following the next in the takeover of state control (ibid., p.28). The opportunities for revolution exist instead, for Raunig, in the localised, varied, and dispersed micropolitical. Without the singular event that definitively overthrows and replaces power, there is a "permanence of actuality", which Raunig boils down to three elements: resistance, insurrection, and constituent power (Raunig, 2007, p.54). Revolutionary praxis therefore takes place at a "granular" level as attempts at antagonising different manifestations of systemic blockages, together, make up the active present participle of the adjective "constituent" in power.

His analysis therefore concerns the transience of becoming: how the overlapping of art and revolutionary machines briefly interrupt precise points in a system. We might imagine concatenations to materialise and dissipate repeatedly, in various degrees:

> The concatenation of revolutionary machines and art machines is actualized in more or less well developed forms in the practices that are analyzed here. In some cases the overlapping remains murky or

> fragmentary, sometimes it is only a potentiality. Yet even where the rapprochement of art and revolution fails, traces of the overlap can still be recognized. (ibid., p.18-19)

Of note to this study is his acknowledgement of failure: in his view, activist art is prone to failure because it directly challenges "repressive state apparatuses" while also being at the same time "marginalized by structural conservatisms in historiography and the art world" (ibid.). The combination of radical politics and new modes of meaning-making also works against the grain of broader political and aesthetic practices, suggesting that failure is something that haunts much of activist art. Implicit in concatenation are both *meeting* as well as *chance*, because the interaction between art and revolution are mechanically merged through "cogs [in] machines" that "intertwine, extend into one another" in ways that are "permanent and transversal" (ibid., p.265). With meeting and chance underpinning his thinking on concatenation, failure is inevitably generated as part of its process. This is noted and mentioned as part of his case studies, but there is no focused investigation on the ramifications of failure itself; after all, Raunig's thesis is built on the more felicitous results of concatenating art and revolution machines, not the failures. In "Communist Hypothesis" (2010), Alain Badiou begins with reflections on the global collapse of communism and, pertinently here, on the meaning of failure when placed in conjunction with an ongoing anti-capitalist struggle:

> What exactly do we mean when we say that all the socialist

> experiments that took place under the sign of that hypothesis ended in 'failure'? Was it a complete failure? By which I mean: does it require us to abandon the hypothesis itself, and to renounce the whole problem of emancipation? (Badiou, 2010, p.6)

For him, it is necessary to historicise failure, to make it "the proof of the hypothesis, provided the hypothesis is not abandoned" (ibid., p.7). This is the process of communism as it fights its way towards victory *against* our subjective tendencies, the latter of which is disposed to fear "not of fighting, but of winning" (ibid., p.32). He argues that "[f]or a politics of emancipation, the enemy that is to be feared most is not repression at the hands of the established order. It is the interiority of nihilism, and the unbounded cruelty that can come with its emptiness" (ibid.). For Badiou, politics is ultimately about what is done – the deeds – and not the names of things, which are devoid of content (ibid., p.8). Failures are therefore a part of deeds, and these acquire meaning when situated within a revolutionary history that, he reminds us, does not give up on itself. But in context of this study, the focus lies in fact on what we need to supposedly "get over", as Badiou puts it (ibid., p.16). Why is failure seen as a terrible disorientation that needs to be replaced by more practical affective dispositions? I would like to argue that failure finds meaning not only in its historicisation, but above all, in embodied practices that are capable of holding onto meaning in different ways.

In his pathbreaking historical examination of failure within an American historical context, Scott A. Sandage positions it as the inverse to capitalist

success (Sandage, 2005). Specifically, he argues that a conflation of meaning between financial ordeal and self-deficiency occurred as "entrepreneurship became the primary model of American identity" (ibid., p.4). Those who are maladjusted to capitalism are not only involved in failing endeavours, but are *themselves* seen as failures. People like

> bankrupts, deadbeats, broken men, down-and-outers, bad risks, good-for-nothings, no-accounts, third-raters, flunkies, little men, loafers, small fries, small potatoes, old fogies, goners, flops, has-beens, ne'er-do-wells, nobodies, forgotten men. (ibid., p.5-6)

Hearkening to Max Weber's 1905 text on the connection between capitalism and the Protestant work ethic, Sandage's selection of insults listed above are steeped in the familiar concoction of ambition and sexism that demonstrates the social irrelevance of unproductive men. Women would not have played a role, much less bodies of queer sexualities; in both cases, failure to participate in public discourse was inscribed as a matter of course. The drive for "equality" that so marks feminism has been as necessary as it has been disenchanting, smacking of a similar capitalist ambition to claim one's relevance in a world shaped by patriarchal norms. Jack Judith Halberstam sets himself the task of staying close to failure in his 2011 text, summoning the Benjaminian *flâneur* as he "strolls down unchartered streets in the 'wrong' direction" (Halberstam, 2011, p.6). By foregrounding the value of "intuition and blind fumbling" (ibid.), Halberstam challenges what learning means and with it, epistemic authority:

> These alternative cultural and academic realms, the areas beside academia rather than within the intellectual worlds conjured by *losers, failures, dropouts, and refuseniks*, often serve as the launching pad for alternatives precisely when the university cannot. (ibid., p.7, my emphasis)

Tying in failure with Foucault's antidisciplinary knowledges – the contents and ways of knowing deemed illegible and illegitimate in the eyes of academia – Halberstam portrays the "subversive intellectual" who excels in disqualified and/or autodidactic approaches that prioritise completely different importances. In confronting the university as a "site of incarcerated knowledge" (ibid., p.15), he aims to "resist mastery" while "privileg[ing] the naïve and nonsensical" in order to develop "oppositional pedagogies" that test out counterhegemonic possibilities (ibid., p.12). The description is just as crucial and applicable for Raunig's activist artists who, in their search for radical alternatives to art and politics, must fail to adhere to conventional markers of skill or expertise. At the same time, their inability and/or unwillingness to comply makes space for contingencies and experimentality, which exert a disobedient pressure on regulatory systems beyond the art world.

Not merely redeeming failure with a winsome attitude of resistance, Halberstam reminds us of queer unbeing that sees the subject yielding to dominant ideologies at the same time as opposing them (ibid., p.23). In the

"murky waters of a counterintuitive, often impossibly dark and negative realm of critique and refusal" (ibid., p.2), failure is also fraught with loss, a familiar terrain that comes as part of being unintelligible to a disciplinary heteronormativity. In his queer analysis, this is a different yet complementary argument to that of Sandage's: failure must be examined with processes of subjectification vis-à-vis capitalist and normative structures. Taking a photographic series by Brassaï as a point of departure, Halberstam feels out some of the socio-cultural contours of lesbian life in 1930s Paris. He focuses specifically on a set of images from Le Monocle that depicts lesbians interacting and partying at a nightclub. Despite that, he acknowledges the "backward feelings" (following Heather Love's examination of queer loss, 2007) that pervades the scene:

> The photographs of Le Monocle are shrouded in darkness, shadowy even though the scenes they depict are quite upbeat and joyful. In this way the images are able to capture both the persistence of queer life and the staging of queer life as impossible. […] What remains unattainable in the butches' masculinity, we might say, is what remains unattainable in all masculinity: all ideal masculinity by its very nature is just out of reach, but it is only in the butch, the masculine woman, that we notice its impossibility. Brassaï's photographs thus capture three things; the darkness of the night worlds within which queer sociability takes place; the failure of ideal masculinity that must be located in the butch in order to make male masculinity seem possible; and a queer femininity that is not merely dark but invisible. (Halberstam, 2011,

p.99-100)

As if haunted by failure, lesbian desire is enacted here through heterosexual courtship, which gives form to the non-platonic affection. Even though the masquerade is a means to an end – the action performatively normalises the love, lust, and desire between the women – failure looms as long as these are still an enculturised impossibility. Despite queer tools of adaptation and subversion that contort social threats into new opportunities and social critique, precarity remains unchallenged; one's legitimacy persists unresolved through performative iterations such as these, which *at the same time* puts one in the position to undermine it. The crux, then, is that queer failure has a clarity that can be tapped into for "a truly political negativity" (ibid., p.110). As dark as it might feel, failure is a way out.

This arguably still allows success to seep back in as failure becomes a means to achieve. While Halberstam's reading offers cues to taking seriously those affects proximal to loss, rage, and disappointment, is there a way of thinking through failure in more liminal terms, to dwell on its discomfort without succumbing to trauma or the lure of moving on completely? The activist artists of Raunig's argument do not happen to fail merely as an inevitable consequence of concatenation's moving cogs. Instead, the meetings – or negotiations, to emphasise social emergence over a meeting of separate entities – of his art and revolution machines are affectively textured with doubts and mistakes. In attending to an embodied criticality with regards to socially negotiated art, this study asks whether art practices can live out its

own failure by queerly subverting conventions of art and sociality, indeed, but importantly also by undoing "the toxic positivity of contemporary life" (Halberstam, 2010, p.4). At its best, art practices are able to material-discursively (see: 1.1.4. on the meaning-making performativity of things) reconfigure the obligation to keep up a can-do attitude, and instead, articulate discontent, ruts, and uncertainties. The lesson afforded here is how illegitimate learning is enabled precisely when one does not seek to eliminate but live with failure. To this end, Ann Cvetkovich's study on depression indicates what this could entail:

> The linkage between depression and political failure is relevant not just to queer politics; it also pertains to the politics of race in the wake of the incomplete projects of civil rights and decolonization. The limits of political representation and legal recognition in eliminating racism require not only new visions for the future but the affective energy to sustain disappointment. The turn to public cultures of memory that address transnational histories of genocide, colonization, slavery, and diaspora stems from the need to connect with histories of trauma that have not yet been overcome […] A depressive antisociality can accompany an insistence that the past is not over yet. (Cvetkovich, 2012, p.7)

Affect under capitalism is medicalised as depression in Cvetkovich's reading, which also corresponds to the subjectivisation of failure in Standage's text. At stake in the productive potentials of failure, then, is *staying* with it; what

needs changing or disturbing, rather, is the simplistic view that posits a success and failure axis in order to make *more* out of difficult feelings.

Be it activist or socially engaged art, the opportunities to sit with failure as something important or critical are few. Instead, there is a celebratory tendency to organisations like Creative Time, who now have the reputation to collate and publicise projects at an international level through their publications and annual summits; or The Visible Award, whose first Temporary Parliament took place in 2015 in Liverpool. For the latter, the directors of the Visible project held the parliament in order to short-list and ultimately award funding and recognition to a worthwhile project from anywhere in the world. To their credit, the artistic director Matteo Lucchetti opened the process reflecting on how awards can "make" artists; "they can't not make artists" (Lucchetti, 2015), given the ripple effect that comes with the acknowledgement. These are organisations with significant institutional leverage, which they use to influence a project's cultural value and its ability to "travel" – Lucchetti's term – beyond its localised context. As such, success acts as a lubricant for expansion and mobility where failure, on the contrary, weighs down, encumbers. Faced with back-to-back Power Point presentations of projects that are literally competing for political urgency, impact, and artistic relevance (which, along with sustainability and fictive engagement were the five named criteria for assessment), a discomfort was palpable amongst the parliament members: what if we split the award money equally amongst all the projects, the parliament ask? But then, Lucchetti explains, the award would fail to resonate; he reminds us not to "underestimate the

political leverage of the prize" (Lucchetti, 2015). In doing so, we were coerced not to question any further the ramifications of recognition or their concerns, if any, of anointing a project with success. Undoubtedly, these are issues that they must have been confronted with before, which they must be equally tired of addressing. The Visible organisation's desire to take part in the constructive redistribution of cultural (and monetary) currency betrays an understandable drive to progress, untether, and enable those who are not in the position to do so. Instead of providing assistance with a distinctly colonial resonance, what would happen if Visible *also* took their relational position and complicity as seriously as they did their ambition for "sustaining socially engaged art in a global context"? This can then be seen as an examination of systemic failure that can take place beside their current work to self-reflexively show how their organisation have come to possess such a power. There is value in the dwelling-on that recentres those negative affects associated with being called out, as much as with one's own disappointment, grief, etc. In particular, bodies, institutions, and other subjective "nodal points" (Ahmed, 2004) that have made themselves invulnerable to negative affects and impressions should learn to seize them as opportunities for self-reflection. Failure is a necessary pause that feels heavy, forcing us into doubt but also greater consideration. It is a consuming feeling that can nonetheless dislodge the mandate often placed on socially engaged art to provide solutions or positive outcomes. Instead, we can make space for uncertainties and emotional ambivalences that actually accompany aesthetic and political processes.

1.1.6. Sinthomeopathy and over-identification of the continuing avant-garde in Marc James Léger

In his 2012 publication "Brave New Avant Garde", independent art theorist James Léger argues for two main things: an artistic reclamation of political radicality using a psychoanalytical analysis of subjectivity and a more unified vision on the political left to define the task at hand. What he goes on to describe is in fact a rehabilitation of an avant-garde, which has historically brought together art and praxis:

> The avant garde idea continues to operate as the repressed underside of the contemporary forms of extradisciplinary practice. […] I stand in opposition to new times cultural studies, that the left has to be absorbed into strategies of postmodern complicity: a contemporary avant garde is one that seeks a path beyond what Hal Foster has termed the "double aftermath" of modernism and postmodernism and responds to Mao's injunction: Reject your illusions and prepare for struggle. (Léger, 2012, p.2-3)

Concerned that a cohesive class-based struggle has unravelled into seemingly irreconcilable difference politics, Léger is calling for a unified movement that recognises a common enemy in advanced capitalism. In so doing, he re-emphasises class as the most crucial political battle of the present. Central to his idea of an avant-garde cultural praxis is "sinthomeopathy", a psychoanalytic term he borrows from Lacan to refer to the way in which

subjectivity establishes critical distance by means of fantasy, used here in reference to the "impossible exit from the institutionalized artworld" (ibid., p.42). For Léger, artists too often rely on the straight-forward correlation between ideological, aesthetic, and poetic contents (ibid., p.146), which make many practices immediately legible and susceptible to institutional cooptation. Léger draws from Barthes' descriptions of "myth on the left" and "myth on the right" to account for the prevalence of earnest directness in socially engaged art: the left "has only one language, that of [its] emancipation" whereas the language of the right "is rich, multiform, supple, [and] has an exclusive right to meta-language" (Barthes cited in Léger, 2012, p.146-147). He repudiates the notion of a singular language on the left, of activist modes of communication as confrontation, seeking instead to recuperate a linguistic, artistic, and textu(r)al complexity through sinthomeopathic praxis. In other words, the avant-garde of his argument would fully commit to an oppositional politics and work towards structural change by exercising its aesthetic aptitude upon subjectivisation.

Léger's starting point is the negotiation of agency, which is evident in his use of sinthomeopathy to describe a particular kind of subjective attunement against neoliberalism. However, the "avant-garde practitioner" is less concerned with delivering outcomes through direct action than with performances of subjective subversion. The author's key concerns are therefore rooted in the aesthetic and political potentials of subjectivity, which he investigates through a Lacanian psychoanalytic lens via the work of Žižek. As mentioned earlier, Léger seeks to recentre class from the cacophony of

difference politics as the central political problem (Léger, 2012, p.42). Yet he realizes that artists cannot sever their ties with the institutional art world – "we are the institution", quoting Andrea Fraser (Léger, 2012 p.17) – and must therefore come to terms with their political desires through the an aesthetic framework:

> The proper orientation for critical practice is not to find in the autonomy of the aesthetic sphere a free space for the figuring of utopian social possibilities, but to recognize in aesthetic autonomy an already compromised class practice, a self-relating that takes its own denial into account and that is constructed around its own constitutive void. (ibid., p.90)

Lacking the distance to transgress and create spaces for alternative means of production, artist-facilitators cannot deny their place within the institutional art system. In order to sustain criticality, they must create a *fantasy* of separation through processes like "over-identification" (ibid., p.102). Be it in the form of a docent giving an emotionally overwrought museum tour (*Museum Highlights*, Andrea Fraser, 1989) or a deliberately absurd community art project that purports to teach elephants how to paint (*Asian Elephant Art and Conservation Project*, Komar and Melamid, 1995-2000), over-identification is a means of artistically – or fantastically – occupying familiar institutional personnel and characters, methods, and motifs. By contriving a different relational possibility through a fantasy of aesthetic autonomy, the avant-garde artist both acknowledges and struggles against

her inextricability from an "art class" that is always already complicit with neoliberalism – a self-reflexivity that certainly resounds with the research done here.

While the focus on "subjectivisation" rather than on "a programme of advanced art production" (ibid., p.44) is akin to this study's departure from artistic categorisation, Léger stresses the sinthomeopathic articulation of political discontent rather than the criticality of embodiment. Of interest, then, is his positioning of the artist as an over-identifying subject, one that "expos[es] the unwritten social codes that double the official identifications of the Law as, today, post-ideological" (ibid., p.113). Following the thinking of Brussels-Rotterdam artist collective BAVO, Léger locates possibilities of doing so when artists "over-identif[y] with the worst features of late capitalism" (ibid., p.114), which crucially and perversely – his use of Žižek's term – performs a space of resistance in the absence of one. Without an ideological and organisational antagonism, the avant-garde practitioner performs a subjective one in order to create that necessary alienation. Relocating artistic autonomy into fantasy, the over-identifying artist must work against her subjective desire for direct action and be compelled to call bluff on late capitalism in a way that exaggerates her adherence to it (ibid., pp.105-106). His vision of the artistic avant-garde, then, is bound to perverse performances that are directed at the unveiling of complicity.

To think through and refract Léger's over-identifying subject that is locked in such emotionally deliberate and taxing labour, I turn first of all to John

Roberts' more recent analysis of the avant-garde. In it, he also advocates for artistic autonomy but, following Adorno, stresses above all its social relation (Roberts, 2015, p.54):

> Autonomy can practice its strategies of negation only in messy negotiation with these dominant conditions of production and exchange. As such, heteronomy is precisely that which provides the conditions of possibility of the production of the illusion of autonomy. (ibid.,p. 84)

The avant-garde, then, is characterised as the ongoing struggle to emerge from heteronomy by posing a challenge to "a debased communicability or sociability". For Roberts, this puts the "use value" of art in inextricable and negotiated terms with life (ibid., p.85). While he insists on art being a "thing apart" (ibid., p.84), the caveat is that it is only ever conditional, with the avant-garde acting as placeholder. As such, it instates an uncertain division between "autonomy" and "heteronomy", which renders the argument more proximal to the embodied experience of this study. Particularly striking is his description of avant-garde's disobedient temporality – specifically an "anti-historicism" that refutes a capitalist deadening of connections between past, present, and future – and how it calls forth an "asocial subject" that acts "in discord with the situation within which it finds itself" (ibid., p.89). Found in the very title of his text, the avant-garde constitutes a "revolutionary time" by enfolding "futures past" into the present while allowing it to remain an ongoing project in excess of time (ibid., p.257). In turn, it is the asocial

subject who enacts a "historical obstinacy" by refusing the deadening separation between past, present, and future. It restores an "alertness [against a] total historicist lockdown" (ibid., p.49) being out of joint not only with the self (in a process of self-negation) but with the cultural traditions that limit her conditions (ibid., p.89). What the asocial subject produces is therefore necessarily new and othered by the fact that it disobeys the compartmentalisation of capitalist time. As such, it is a subjective struggle that is not necessarily pre-defined by performative possibilities as fantasy.

In both cases, the avant-garde posits a subjective dislocation as criticality. That this has to take place autonomously in order to properly constitute a subversive position might ring true if a disclocated subjectivity is not *already* embodied on a day-to-day basis; not *already* marked by asociality and thus *already* has to over-identify with normative conventions as a matter of survival (since you must learn to "pass" within your surroundings). For this study, therefore, the resonance of the avant-garde's subjective dislocation has less to do with its (emergent) separation from the real or from heteronomy than it does with an existing, present sense of dislocation that constitutes queer embodiment.

In refracting what this means, it is argued here following Sara Ahmed that the ways we are dislocated make different objects and possibilities within (or just out of) reach. This means how we become is intimately tied to what we do, articulating where we are positioned. What I want to reiterate here is the work that goes into normativising a conventional, neoliberal orientation in the

first place. How do our relations to other bodies and objects intermingle to shape desire and what is possible? In her phenomenological analysis to queer orientation, Ahmed cites Husserl's positioning of himself at the writing table. To attend to the table means relegating other rooms and things within the house to a "dimly apprehended depth or fringe of indeterminate reality" (Husserl cited in Ahmed, 2006, p.549), turning them into the supportive "background" that renders his philosophical work possible. Her interest, then, falls on the table's orientation and its "conditions of emergence or arrival […] as the thing that it appears to be in the present" (ibid.). How the table makes itself available to him as a writing device relates to what he does on it and the accompanying objects he repeatedly gestures towards, all of which shapes his own becoming as well as that of the table's; the latter is never seen as a place for play or food, for instance. The how and what intertwine to make the where, which Ahmed calls "tendencies" that do not have any originary locus but rather, inherit proximities that shape our spheres of influence. Each of our bodies is a "zero point" that tends and unfolds in relation to these objects. The spatio-temporality of orientation not only enunciates bodies and objects, but in particular endows or disables the former's ability to properly take up space. Failing to do so contributes towards a queer relation – literally bent, slanted – to the "bodily horizon" (ibid., p.552) The straightly aligned orientation, then, requires effort that over time (paradoxically / ideally) appears as effortless.

This is not to claim that the becoming of queer bodies is an absence of effort, for different tendencies often leads to painful and unhappy objects that

bodies have to navigate again and again. The process, however, eventually opens up other possibilities that are experienced as belated, untimely, or both; realisation often feels both like a dawning and an always-been at the same time. This is another dimension in Heather Love's "backwardness" (2007; see: 1.1.5. on staying with failure), which rethinks queer attachment in terms of camp, immaturity, and memory that turns its back, so to speak, onto the future. Indeed, the queering of time is taken to its most pessimist conclusion in Lee Edelman's critique of "reproductive futurism" (2004), wherein queer sexualities are presented not only as disorientations but embodiments of the death drive and as such, the end of the subject as defined by heteronormative inheritance. Such a refusal of time thus constitutes an important dimension of what this refraction argues as disorientation.

In this navigation of proximal objects and bodies is where subjective dislocation takes place, which is more readily experienced than Léger's separate space of over-identification. By refracting his argument for an elsewhere based in fantasy, I locate it much closer to our lived and living experiences. In a socially *negotiated* art, the focus is on the attunement of disorientation beside other bodies and objects that enunciates where we are by means of what (is nearby) and how. In other words, it is a critical proximity, not critical distance, that is crucial to understanding counterpublic affect. Rather than consigning nearness to a simple matter-of-fact, disorientations are highlighted as a factor in the making / remaking of bodies, objects, and worlds.

1.2. Towards a methodological "beside" and an embodied examination of socially negotiated art

The main body of this chapter consists of a theoretical overview of socially engaged / negotiated art, which attempts to plot out a few key ideas with regards to its perception and development. In doing so, it provides the basis for an embodied analysis and refraction done through queer and feminist thinking. The aim is to draw out the initial contours for the rest of the study, to generate the positionings that introduce the relational material that forms the heart of the research. By turning the attention to the in-between, the field opens up to a different kind of critical intervention, one that is not poised to defend its artistic or political contribution, but considers what emerges relationally in the process.

This section presents the study's methodology, which is premised on a prepositional focus extracted from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's "Touching Feeling" (2003). Before doing so, a summary of the six theories is given in order to clarify the research trajectory so far. The first concerned Bourriaud's social interstice of relational aesthetics and a proposed third space re-imagining via Bhabha and Butler; the second looked at community as an outgrowth of site-specificity and gave a reassessment of its counterpublic potential; the third reworked Kester's empathy in dialogical aesthetics into a dispossession that is cognisant of power and complicity; the fourth attended to material-discursivity as a critique of the Rancièrian aesthetic regime adopted by Bishop; the fifth accounted for the significance of (queer) failure

as a byproduct of Raunig's concatenating art and revolutionary machines; and finally, the sixth re-examined the oppositional avant-garde in Léger's sinthomeopathy and argued for an embodied disorientation that would make the most out of our critical proximity. The reason for undertaking such a theoretical overview has also been a generative exercise to assert this study's point of view; to make the adjustment from socially engaged to socially negotiated via embodiment is to invest in the validity of experience and the uncertainty of bodily and affective epistemologies. This includes investigating textural realms that are often too slippery for words and locating means of attending to them with sensitivity. Taking cue from the six queerly embodied interventions of socially engaged art theories, then, what does this sort of investment entail methodologically?

1.2.1. "Beside" as a prepositional research approach

Spurred by the idea of social negotiation, Sedgwick's challenge to think "beside" in her introduction to "Touching Feeling" (2003) is a particularly important reminder for the way in which research can happen. In the introduction to her essays on feelings, she talks about her retreat from more conventional academic habits of the time. This involves putting into place "tools and techniques for nondualistic thought" that she regards as crucial to the examination of difference. For Sedgwick, reading "beneath" and "behind" subjects for deeper meaning correlates to a "paranoid" impulse (Sedgwick, 2003, p.27), which is predicated on expert analysis and revelation on the one

hand and "an infinite reservoir of naïveté" (ibid., p.141) on the other. Instead of an understanding based on depth, she proposes an alternative by way of example: siblings in bed side by side. Their interaction can fall anywhere along a spectrum of

> desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations" (ibid., p.8).

Central to Sedgwick's proposal in her idea of "beside" is precisely this capacity to encompass different relations in tension with one another. She references anthropologist Esther Newton's floor plan in "Mother Camp" (1972), a study of drag and gender performance in relation to use-delineated, physical spaces. The meticulousness with which Newton attended to the structuring of space brought to life a particular ecosystem of drag, which itself supports the possibility of the drag performance. This spatio-temporality is something that Sedgwick wants to transmit in context of her research, given the living dynamic it offers. Equally, I seek to apply a spatially aware "beside", as this study's methodology because of its closeness to the site of social negotiation.

With regards to "nondualistic thought", Sedgwick recognises the gravitational pull that produces a "law of the excluded middle" (Sedgwick, 2003, p.8), the point and counterpoint of comparative analysis. She problematises the reliance of scholarship on the "drama of exposure" based on this paranoid binary of façade and (a covered) hidden truth, while at the same time

emphasising a textural perception that "is always, immediately, and de facto to be immersed in a field of active narrative hypothesizing, testing, and re-understanding of how physical properties act and are acted upon over time" (Sedgwick, 2003, p.13). This study does not seek to write off exposure or revelation as modes of research, for there is still the need to disprove badly formulated theories. What it does want to do is to open up the possibility of reparative research and explore how a haptic sensibility can be foregrounded in art theorisation. Textures offer a different in-road to understanding that heeds the intensities and affective energies of sociality. Indeed, by gravitating towards the beside (spatial) and its textural (felt) corollary, the study positions them as inseparable from and inextricable from more cognitive readings of art's political endeavours. This spatiality allows the research to consider a socially *negotiated* art – which is how these art practices will be described in the upcoming three core chapters of my study – with finer material and embodied attunement. As such, the aim here to propose a different framework within theoretical discourse: beside arguments of artistic legitimacy or political efficacy is the possibility to theorise immersively, to think through the relational material as generative spaces for self-reflection, transformation, and critique. Along with its productive potential, it also enables the transmission of affective economies (Ahmed, 2004). The changing scenes of collective feeling take place in this in-between, in the circulation of energies that form temporary (counterpublic) clusters.

1.2.2. Queer and feminist refractions of Freirean dialogue, love, and praxis

The remaining three chapters of this study examine the in-between that is the site and material of socially negotiated art practices. They each focus on a specific facet of relationality that carries with it a wide set of assumptions and desires, namely dialogue, love, and praxis. These ideas are taken from radical educator Paulo Freire's writings on critical pedagogy, most notably from his seminal text, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970). Borrowed as a starting point for deeper theoretical and practical analyses, each of the three facets help to unfold relevant ideas and definitions that suggest, together, how a socially *engaged* art can be reconceived as a socially *negotiated* art. Freire's desire to pedagogically think through and enact upon a shared socio-political reality parallels many art practices' desire to do the same. Compounded by my own experience as an art teacher and worker, his practical focus on dialogue, love, and praxis was deeply resonant, which this study eventually recalibrates with "beside" as a methodology.

On a structural level, however, the link between critical pedagogy and socially "engaged" art can be found in the political potential that is enunciated in co-produced subjectivities. Its current instrumentalisation notwithstanding, art in the social realm has clear connections with the avant-garde (see: 1.1.6.) as well as early community arts of the "cultural democracy" ilk in the UK (see: 3.3.2. for a short overview of the 1960s and 1970s community arts movement). There is a deliberate merging of art and life, which is echoed in

the Freirean ambition to transform life through education. That pedagogy presumes sociality in its scene of learning makes it, following Sedgwick, an important "sibling" reference point for conceiving the emergent potentials of socially negotiated art. While "pedagogy" is etymologically linked to the teaching of a child, Freire extends it towards a political praxis. Beyond his work, the word is now associated with learning and education more broadly, as "the contemporary semantic resonance of both these terms is rich and overlapping" (O'Neill, 2010, p.16). This "educational turn" in art explored by curator Paul O'Neill and other art workers, practitioners, and theorists in 2010 was a significant gauge for the development of socially engaged art, providing the field with the tools to rethink how art can be bolstered (or exhausted) by leaning into pedagogy and education. An extensive study of education projects led by artists or art organisations around the world was also recently compiled by curator and researcher Silvia Franceschini, who reframes co-learning into a "politics of affinity" against the precarity of life (2018). Both of these valences – the crossover of radical education and art; the forms of proximity it enables – are important to this research. Moreover, education as a sector is an important part of the current neoliberal climate, wherein school pupils as young as eleven take standardised tests in accordance to syllabi and university students expect to learn "skill sets" valuable to the free market. As such, education works to enable as well as restrict alternative points of view. How do radical education and socially engaged art work in relation to this ambiguity?

Thinking alongside Freire's pedagogy, which was conceived specifically for the

enactment of change, is one of many possible first steps in grasping how social processes function in art. His writing both defies and spans across disciplines, including philosophy, candid conversations, autobiography, and liberation theology. He has personally noted how open his work is to (mis)interpretations, of which this research is wary as it renegotiates the space between social change and desire. In fact, Freire distanced himself from many works that referenced him, because educators often neglected to situate his writings within the context of oppression and liberation. He becomes increasingly pointed about education's radical potential, which is seen in the following conversation taken from a later "talking book" co-written with frequent collaborator Ira Shor:

> *Paulo (Freire)*: For me, education is always directive, always. The question is to know towards what and with whom it is directive. This is the question. I don't believe in self-liberation. Liberation is a social act. Liberating education is a social process of illumination.
>
> *Ira (Shor)*: There is no personal self-empowerment?
>
> *Paulo*: No, no, no. Even when you individually feel yourself *most* free, if this feeling is not a *social* feeling, if you are not able to use your *recent* freedom to help others to be free by transforming the totality of society, then you are exercising only an individualist attitude towards empowerment or freedom. (Shor and Freire, 1987, p.22-23, original emphasis)

The value he places in education lies specifically in its social capacity to liberate – or negotiate new possibilities, to remain specific to this study's position. His talking books are part of this endeavour as he and various interlocutors "[open] up to each other in the adventure of thinking critically" (Freire in Freire and Macedo, 2000, p.187). Such a commitment to encounter's adventurous spontaneity is also taken up in a significant way by artists working in the social realm, as evidenced in the prevalence of workshops and conversational roundtables in their practices. As we have explored through material discursivity (see: 1.1.4.), the very openness of intersubjective exchanges is a matter of negotiation, destabilising whatever intentions artists might have.

The reparative approach of socially negotiated art takes a different look at these points of intersection to consider what happens when bodies, ideas, and institutions are in (difficult, uncomfortable) contact with one another. Freirean understandings of dialogue, love, and praxis function as analytical starting points, beside which queer and feminist perspectives are developed to make sense of the relational material and textures. As mentioned in the end of 1.1.6. on the subjective dislocation of the avant-garde, the key concern of this study is to take seriously the possibility of a critical proximity that offers an alternative to the need for critical distance. The motivation comes from knowing that, for many of us, difference is openly declared by our bodies and by the ways we are (dis)oriented in relation to the bodily horizon (see: 1.1.6.; Ahmed, 2006). What would it look like, then, if we were

to re-examine the thinking and assumptions that underlie Freirean concepts such as dialogue, love, and praxis? The hope is that their refractions enable the self-reflexivity to understand the draw and generative potential of the social; to feel how this space of the in-between shapes us; and to locate other, more embodied and intimate ways of speaking (chapter two), loving (chapter three), and enacting change in the world (chapter four) that can be foregrounded in socially negotiated art practices.

2. Reconsidering dialogue: making a case for frictive speech in socially negotiated art

The first of the three core chapters on the relational material of socially negotiated art examines dialogue. It is divided into two main sections that are focused on: 1. providing a theoretical basis and deconstruction of dialogue, and 2. the analysis of artistic and speech practices. The focus on dialogue comes not only from Freire's pedagogy, but from a desire to understand its influence as an ideal mode of communication in the many art practices that centre around "talking" as a critical process. Through speaking and listening, it is hoped that perspectives can be shared, new points of view made, and differences clarified. This intersects significantly with the pedagogical use of dialogue in social movement work, specifically as advocated by Freire against the "banking" teaching methods that see learners "receiving, filing, and storing the [information as] deposits" (Freire, 1970, p.72). Contrary to this passive mode of learning, Freire's dialogical education encourages learners to take part in "the encounter among women and men who name the world" (ibid., p.89) by "speaking their word" (ibid., p.88). Dialogue is therefore not merely the communication but the *making* of (new) meaning.

The analysis in this chapter is focused on this desire to speak and be listened to with and beside others. More precisely, it questions the egalitarian presumptions that premise the speaking and listening: what of the many differentials that work on the bodies of artists and collaborators, or teachers

and learners, all of whom occupy the same space at the same time? How do these colliding valences of power and privilege show up in the verbal negotiation between parties? And how might styles of speech influence those who are listening? The primary motivation of this chapter, then, is to question horizontality and dialogue as goals for ideal communication. This involves interrogating dialogue from the position of embodied difference. Doing so here involves two stages: the first is the theoretical dimension, comprising education perspectives on dialogue as well as dissensus and agonistics in art theory; the second is speech in practice, looking at the role of dialogue in two art projects and followed by an examination of two *frictive* speech forms.

As noted in 1.2.2. on the intersection of Freire's critical pedagogy and socially negotiated art, the concerns of the three core chapters attend closely to the social in-between as a site for meaning-making. Dialogue, then, is intended to be the most direct strategy that invites discursive negotiation on a topic of interest; this is emphatically repeated in Freire's writing as a socially oriented praxis. But as a broader question of responsibility, dialogue has been explored extensively in the philosophical writings of Bakhtin and Levinas respectively that must be acknowledged. For Bakhtin, dialogue is recognised as a relationality both in life as well as in art, though there remains a shifting centre from which the perception as "I" or author is differed from other points of view – or its "surplus of seeing" (Bakhtin in Holquist, 1994, p.36). The concern lies in seeing oneself through dialogue in order to complete the perspective that revolves around "me" or the author as zero point, which sees the in-between as a social means to a self-centred end. In contrast, Levinas

sees responsibility in terms of other-orientation, even a "hostage situation" as he states in "Otherwise than Being" (Levinas, 1991). He refutes "incarnation as an avatar of the representation of oneself" (ibid., 78) and insists on "face-to-face" confrontation with an other as total exposure to external forces. Our subjectivities are thus called to respond without end as an ethical imperative, not so as to live beside others, but to reach the "hither side" (ibid., p.92) of the incarnate. This once again leapfrogs over the in-between, the difficult middle ground of negotiation that is only there to lead towards somewhere else. How might the responsibility so crucial to dialogue be critiqued in ways that are more resonant with its form, with speech, mediation, and desire for proximity? In a climate wherein animosity is encouraged and xenophobia is masked as making something "great", what of dialogue remains salvageable and what of it should be replaced? More simply, (how) can we talk with one another and generate new meaning in the midst of hostile relations?

2.1. Theories of dialogue in pedagogy and art

The first section of this chapter comprises three subsections that differently examine and challenge the potentials of dialogue. The first subsection opens with a brief introduction to Freire's radical education activism and pedagogical thinking that locks into dialogue as one of his key concepts. As a means of action as well as reflection, dialogue takes place between "actors in intercommunication", who "name" – and possibly re-name – the object that mediates their encounter (Freire, 1970, p. 129). Embedded within the

activism of rural Brazil in the 1960s, his literacy-as-worldmaking programme is geared towards consciousness-raising as a goal, making dialogue a liberatory tool that re-humanises both the oppressed and the oppressor.

Putting this within educational practice, dialogue refers to a mode of teaching and learning that is broadly understood to contrast with "monological models" (Burbules and Bruce, 2001). Educational theorists Nicholas C. Burbules and Bertram C. Bruce argue that dialogical approaches in the classroom can be better understood by being devolved into different communication motives, such as inquiry and debate (ibid.). The assertion here is that the classroom context from which they write already demand a constructive dimension of speech, which makes it hard to address or allow more confrontational forms. Using a classroom experiment that permits the exclusive grouping of "non-white" Maori students (Jones in Boler, 2004), the "fantasy" of speaking to one another (ibid.) on equal terms is addressed.

The third and final subsection unpacks disagreement with regards to artistic production. Rancière's thinking of dissensus within an "aesthetic regime" is examined, specifically its fictional capacity to counter a "policed reality" (Rancière, 2011). This is then discussed alongside the multiple artistic "agonistics" that work in different counter-hegemonic ways (Mouffe, 2007, 2013). The intention is that these perspectives on productive conflict can offer insight to the frictive potential of communication.

2.1.1. Paulo Freire's literacy activism and the co-naming of the world in his use of dialogue

> [A man of about forty] fixed me with a mild, but penetrating gaze, and asked: "Dr. Paulo, sir – do you know where people live? Have you ever been in any of our houses, sir?" And he began to describe their pitiful houses. He told me of the lack of facilities, of the extremely minimal space in which all their bodies were jammed. He spoke of the lack of resources for the most basic necessities. He spoke of physical exhaustion, and of the impossibility of dreams of a better tomorrow. He told me of the prohibition imposed on them from being happy – or even of having hope.
>
> As I followed his discourse, I began to see where he was going to go with it. I was slouching in my chair, slouching because I was trying to sink down into it. And the chair was swiveling, in need of my imagination and the desire of my body, which were both in flight, to find some hole to hide in. (Freire, 2004, p.17-18)

Freire's theoretical and activist work both significantly contributed towards the development of critical pedagogy and reconceiving how social struggles are fought. The aforementioned anecdote comes from an experience early on in his career as a social service administrator in Brazil's northeastern state of Perambuco. Upon being invited to give a talk at a local social centre, he chose to address the prevalence of corporal punishment in the area by advocating

for more "dialogical, loving" parent-child relationships. The confrontation, which took place at the end of the presentation, was for Freire a moment that "seared [his] soul" and showed him that "even when one must speak *to* the people, one must convert the 'to' to a 'with' the people" (ibid.). This would become an essential part of his world-making methodology that began with talking and listening – with what he referred to as dialogue. Yet what caused this shift in thinking was not a dialogical exchange, but a stunning disagreement that engendered a critical moment of emotional dispossession: it is in Freire's experience of frictive discomfort that led to a re-evaluation. Over the course of the chapter, the "frictive" is increasingly taken up as a more precise and complex means of communicating.

Returning to Freire, his understanding of dialogue as part of a larger project that brings the oppressed closer to their human potential[1] happens more deliberately and constructively. He believes in the corresponding human "vocation" to create an effect on a "concrete reality", which turns action into social change (Freire, 1970). In other words, he homes in on an exclusively human act to exert ourselves upon a real, material world, ideally by making it more livable for everyone. In our wilful, ethically motivated enactment lies the crux of the Freirean subject: a being who is in control of his/her actions and heeds his/her duty to intervene in an objective reality. His own literacy work in northeastern Brazil in the 1960s testifies to this *conscientização* (consciousness-raising or conscientisation) project which is, in the end,

[1] His embrace of the "human", in the end, is not problematised despite there having been important critical perspectives to complicate the category. Freire conceives of a learner as progressive, becoming "more human" as his/her consciousness is raised from a "magical" fatalism.

oriented toward the cultural situatedness of those living in the rural margins of the country. Fellow critical pedagogue Henry Giroux reminds us that Freire's literacy oriented activism stems from a specific postcolonial history and military violence in Brazil that, "in the heat of life-and-death struggles", see "[his] recourse into binarisms such as the oppressed vs. the oppressor, problem-solving vs. problem-posing, science vs. magic" (Giroux, 1992, p.19). A large part of his work during this time concerns the learners' ability to read and write as a worldmaking process, or what Giroux calls more precisely "a politics of literacy forged in the political and material dislocations of regimes that exploit, oppress, expel, maim and ruin human life" (ibid., p.18). Conscientisation is likewise more than just awareness, but an ongoing process that always brings you closer to human fulfillment. To do so, Freire advocates education through dialogue, which is described as a horizontal relationship between beings "who cannot be truly human apart from communication" (ibid., p.128).

The seed of his dialogue-based pedagogy was sown in the late 1940s, when he was first appointed as the director of Brazil's newly formed Division of Education and Culture within the national Social Service of Industry (McLaren, 2000, p.142). Between then and his arrest in 1964 — which led to his sixteen-year exile — Freire worked in a number of influential capacities: he was the director in the Division of Culture and Recreation of the city of Recife and also co-founded the Movement of Popular Culture (ibid., p.143). Reflecting upon this period in one of his last texts "Pedagogy of Hope" (2004), he talks about shattering the "culture of silence", that "[the peasants] had discovered not

only that they could speak, but that their critical discourse upon the world, their world, was a way of remaking that world" (Freire, 2004, p.30). In the process of teaching others how to "read the word", he recognised the need for them to learn first of all how to "read the world": "the teaching of the reading and writing of the word to a person missing the critical exercise of reading and rereading the world is, scientifically, politically, and pedagogically crippled" (ibid., p.66).

As an educator who wielded influence in his official government capacity, Freire's literacy programme implemented across rural areas of northeastern Brazil employed unconventional approaches and developed a kind of non-institutional education as political praxis. They would form the foundation for his seminal work, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970). The text focuses on dialogue as a means of establishing mutuality between revolutionary and oppressed subjects, or – in more general terms of education – between educators and learners. The term "dialogue" encompasses at least three recurring elements in Freire's pedagogy: (verbal) communication, equality, and social processes. According to him, "[d]ialogue with the people is neither a concession nor a gift, much less a tactic to be used for domination. Dialogue, as the encounter among men to 'name' the world, is a fundamental precondition for their true humanization" (Freire, 1970, p.137). To have two bodies meet in the co-production of knowledge directly opposes the dominating top-down prescription of information from educator to learner. In his "talking book" conversation with Ira Shor, Freire notes how dialogue functions between the "teacher" and "student":

> Instead of this cordial gift of information to students, the object to be known *mediates* the two cognitive subjects. In other words, the object to be known is put on the table between the two subjects of knowing. They meet around it and through it for mutual inquiry. (ibid., my emphasis)

Freire provides a very specific image of dialogue at work: that it is both a place for gathering ("a table") and a generative possibility ("mutual inquiry") imagined to be as horizontal as possible. For the purpose of this study, however, there is a need to zoom in on another commentary in his conversation with Shor:

> Dialogue does not exist in a political vacuum. It is not a free space where you may do what you want. Dialogue takes place inside some kind of program and context. These conditioning factors create tension in achieving goals that we set for dialogic education. (Freire in Freire and Shor, p.16)

This is a particularly crucial observation for the study, given its emphasis on embodied criticality as part of learning. Further on, Freire reiterates the directive role of the teacher, adding that they must possess the wherewithal to be humble and listen where necessary (ibid.). This is certainly applicable, to the extent that they are sensitive enough to do so. But what if the student refuses to accept what you are saying? Or even to talk when you want to step

back and listen? Giroux observes how Freire's earlier work merely reverses the workings of the colonialism as a way of struggling against it:

> [W]hat happens when the language of the educator is not the same as that of the oppressed? How is it possible to be vigilant against taking up a notion of language, politics, and rationality that undermines recognizing one's own partiality and the voices and experiences of others? How does one explore the contradiction between validating certain forms of 'correct' thinking and the pedagogical task of helping students assume rather than simply follow the dictates of authority, regardless of how radical the project informed by such authority? (Giroux, 1992, p.19)

Indeed, Giroux adds that this earlier tendency to "totalise" is made more complex in Freire's later reflections and talking book publications; the anecdote provided at the start of this subsection might be counted as one. This attention given to his own materiality — the "slouching in [his] chair", how it "swivel[led]", his impulse "to find some hole to hide in" (Freire, 2004, p.17-18) — is something I hope to latch onto further. What does this discomfort do to dialogue? Or rather, what does discomfort enable in terms of other talk and communication modes that dialogue cannot? In light of this study's interest in embodiment and the research possibilities of a lived "beside", how might we attend to the multi-dimensionality of the "programmes and contexts" when dialogue fails to meet up to its promises of horizontality? These are all questions that are pertinent to the unfolding of

the chapter. It must be acknowledged that the socially negotiated art projects taking place within the Anglo-American and European contexts most proximal to this study are far from the realities from which Freire develops his pedagogy. However, there are important points of contact where the mediation of vast differences are concerned, particularly with regards to the negotiations of tension and power that so affect the relational material.

2.1.2. A problematisation of dialogue in educational contexts

In order to apprehend some common conceptions and practices of dialogue, one need only glean over some news headlines: dialogue is typically "called for" or "entered into" as a means to resolve conflict. The assumption is that a meeting is necessary for the negotiation of political differences. This concept of dialogue attributes neutrality to debate as a discussion platform, giving all parties the same space and conditions for expression. But just how are marginalised bodies supposed to fit into the discursive arena? If that proves to be impossible, what counterpublic alternatives are there? This is touched upon later on in this chapter (see: 2.2.2.); of relevance here is to think through dialogue as a practice, specifically as examined through the lens of education studies. The focus is on verbal communication and its conditions: what are the assumptions, intentions, and circumstances for dialogue with regards to its desired outcomes?

In the co-authored text "Theory and Research on Teaching as Dialogue"

(2001), education philosophers Nicholas C. Burbules and Bertram C. Bruce propose four possible versions that attempt to typologise some possible shapes and forms of verbal communication that complicate the generality of dialogue within a classroom setting. They do so by defining aims and then assigning each of them with a corresponding approach. The intention is to "distinguish" them "from 'monological' models" (Burbules and Bruce, 2001), but not in a "dichotomous characterization" that reduces the lecture form entirely (ibid.). The effort here, they acknowledge, is restricted by the needs of a school environment that prescribes a certain kind of teacher authority, but it is one they also seek to shake up somewhat. Indeed, they caution "the idea that a teacher can individually hold sway in the classroom, directing the interests of students along pathways that he or she can control, is increasingly outmoded", with "contexts of diversity vastly complicat[ing] the preference for any particular pattern of pedagogical communicative relation" (ibid.). In clarifying their awareness of multiple discursive perspectives that redistribute attention and recalibrates who gets to speak (on top of when, where, and how), they propose a number of different approaches to dialogue that ultimately remain invested in "implicit norms" (ibid.) – i.e. expectations and behaviours expected within a school.

The effort to multiply the significance of dialogue, then, is still pragmatically beholden to the optimisation of the learning experience withing a school setting. This means that their thinking is directed towards certain learning outcomes, rooted as dialogue is in the clarification of "implicit norms" that are shared, in this case, in the classroom. It must be emphasised that the

reference to education studies here is not a call for their direct application in socially negotiated art, but rather an attempt to grasp how dialogue is obstinately linked to a particular understanding of communication: one that presumes pedagogically constructive relations. The four speech types proposed by Burbules and Bruce are therefore more telling of the generally positive aims that teachers have of their learners – and similarly art commissioners of their projects – than they are indicative of the range of communication possibilities between speakers (which parallels the idea of "resolution" hearkened to at the start of this subsection):

> *Inquiry* involves a co-investigation of a question, the resolution of a disagreement, the formulation of a compromise, all as ways of addressing a specific problem to be solved or answered.
>
> *Conversation* involves a more open-ended discussion in which the aim of intersubjective understanding, rather than the answering of any specific question or problem, is foremost.
>
> *Instruction* involves an intentional process in which a teacher "leads" a student, through questioning and guidance, to formulating certain answers or understandings (this approach is often seen as the paradigm of the "Socratic method").
>
> *Debate* involves an exchange less about reaching agreement, or finding common answers, to testing positions through an agonistic

> engagement for and against other positions; it may include a process of problematizing even the terms of discussion themselves. The aim is that alternative points of view can each be clarified and strengthened through such an engagement. (Burbules and Bruce, 2001)

By stressing the four different dimensions that dialogue multiplies into, Burbules and Bruce shed light on modes of exchange between the teacher and student. As such, the specific axes that connect the speakers are based largely on authority and compliance, trust and patience, all of which are centred around the student's experience of learning. In a conversation with fellow art producers and curators working in art education for galleries, Serpentine Gallery curator Janna Graham questions the distinction between the affective and spatial "subject formation" that art is concerned with, versus "becoming a learned person" through education (Graham in Steedman, 2012, p.95). This meeting of artistic and educational endeavours in the formative capacities of subjectivity is just one of many cusps upon which socially negotiated art finds itself. Not surprisingly, the four communication strands proposed by Burbules and Bruce – inquiry, conversation, instruction, and debate – are all readily recognisable methods used in contemporary art contexts. By pluralising the forms and intentions of dialogue, Burbules and Bruce aim to "move beyond 'speech act' analyses – who speaks, how much they speak, etc. – to look at the discursive content and *how it is heard and responded to* by others" (Burbules and Bruce, 2001, my emphasis.). They caution that not all communication is constructive, thus substantiating their call for a more self-aware and critical discursive space in which educators are

able to align the value of conflict beside the constructive teaching of skills (ibid.). Their observation critiques education's underlying obligation to provide and facilitate an environment in which ideas are controlled by standardised syllabi. Therefore, despite the best intentions of many teachers to supplant lecturing with dialogue, Burbules and Bruce caution the coercive capacity of the oversimplified question-and-answer model of classroom communication by expanding the scope and meaning of dialogue.

Yet there are some problems with their characterisation: as much as it attempts to bring conflict into consideration, it still sidesteps what confrontations actually mean for teacher and student, and it also assumes that everyone is willing to participate. Moreover, dialogue is now imposed upon many education contexts by the very same performance-led authorities (e.g. Office for Standards in Education – OFSTED – here in the UK) that Burbules and Bruce are implicitly flagging up. Driven by quantifiable targets, dialogue is then reductively understood as a superficial conversation that keeps articulations of difference at arm's length. While the chapter increasingly focuses on the shape and form of "difference" in speech, the examination here begins with the voice as a direct correlation of representation and inclusivity.

Our voice is frequently coupled with our "rights": to speak up is a fundamental entitlement, which supposedly demonstrates our social and political inclusion. But what if speaking up feels more oppressive than liberatory? Related to this question is who ultimately benefits from speaking

up, from engaging in dialogue. What is the cost of taking part, especially for bodies that are marginalised in broader social contexts? Education sociologist Alison Jones takes a critical lens to representative inclusion in her essay "Talking Cure: The Desire for Dialogue" (2004). In it, she deliberately separates a classroom of students into two discussion groups: one group of white students and another group of primarily Maori students in this New Zealander context. While the white students perceived this to be discomforting, the Maori students welcomed the opportunity to chat more honestly. Jones's experiment underscores a greater assumption about the availability of the marginalised – most typically the racialised and gendered other – in the production of new knowledges. "The fantasy of talking together and the romance of access [require] the embodied presence of peers" (Jones in Boler, 2004, p.64), which means the strategic ethnic segregation in this classroom is inevitably felt as a loss by white students:

> [W]here nonwhite peers are absent, the possibility of hearing the voices, of access to the marginalized other, is denied to white students. […] Therefore, the removal of the possibility of gaining knowledge of the other from the other (assured through their presence, and therefore their potential engagement) means that the white students and parents accurately sense a powerful loss. (ibid., p.63)

In locating the gaps of embodied understanding in the constructive and conciliatory in dialogue, we need to also consider what is abandoned as *unconducive* to it and why, namely what is regarded as destructive and

exclusionary. To be sure, the intention is not to set up an opposition, nor is this a contrarian gesture meant to redeem the merits of quarrel. It is rather to tease apart what is (not) accepted discursive practice and for what reasons, as well as to remind us of the situations in which dialogue is summoned: at the failure or absence of communication; at the beginning of a relationship or collaboration. Doing so opens up disagreement for investigation and makes more of the incommensurabilities between bodies, allowing the coercion that takes place in communication to be better illuminated.

Returning to the socially negotiated art practitioner, the processes of co-production, co-learning, and other social negotiations are means by which an art project performatively constitutes itself; it enacts and responds to the desires of a localised group. But are her working conditions as restrictive as the classroom teacher whose primary aim is to encourage constructive communication? The assumption is that there would be greater allowance for uncomfortable modes of communication, inasmuch as art practices embody different modes of experimentation. But how does that work out in practical terms? And, having to answer to commissioning curators, project partners, and participants all at the same time, what sort of reflection and accountability should she (not) assume? Chapter one touched upon Claire Bishop's Rancièrian aesthetic negation and its role in leaving behind an affectively "troubling wake" (see: 1.1.4.). In "Artificial Hells" (2012), she specifically discussed Artur Żmijewski's painting workshop *Them* (2007) to go against the dialogical mandate of communication. What happened was a painful breakdown of relations in the face of enforced togetherness (even if

the participation of different groups was voluntary to begin with). The video documentation of the painting workship is a hard watch. Led by Żmijewski, the workshop involved members from various organisations, representing nationalists, Christians, Jewish, and young socialists. Their task was to paint images depicting their group's values and in doing so, the tense atmosphere of the workshop gradually deteriorates. Żmijewski encouraged participants to go around the room to amend the paintings done by other groups, which escalated into series of aggressive acts: slicing through work, taping other participants' mouths shut, even setting fire to a painting. Many had to walk out, visibly shaken by the experience. As a viewer, you are consumed by a kind of voyeuristic "troubling wake" that is now made over-familiar by semi-scripted reality television. By lumping groups together with "one rubric of belonging" (Bauman, 2000, p.176; see: 1.1.2. on "unworking" community), Żmijewski deliberately creates a greenhouse environment that demonstrates how the best dialogical intentions can be unravelled when they are confronted by embodiments that are strangest to them. This points to the inevitably ethical considerations of socially negotiated art and the need to better articulate an artwork's accountability to those taking part in its relational processes.

But such a critique of dialogue as its mirror opposite – violent irresolution – cooked up in a confined space by an artist whose aim was to emotionally overexpose his participants, seems to be a simplification of what *else* is possible. That is, *beside* the opposition of dialogue and conflict, what *else* is there? The following chapter section (2.1.3.) deals specifically with the friction

engendered from the meeting of multiple perspectives and disagreements. It turns to Rancière's thoughts on dissensus in art and politics as well as Mouffe's agonistics as an opportunity to heed communication differences; or, more precisely, as an opening that takes one away from the coercion of consensus.

2.1.3. Renegotiating fictional dissensus

To think through uncomfortable communication as a refraction of dialogue's idealised horizontality, we need to look at Ranciere's notion of "dissensus" to orient the politically and aesthetically productive stake of disagreement. For him, "[t]he exceptionality of politics is the exceptionality of a practice that has no field of its own but has to build its stage in the field of police" (Rancière, 2011, p.11). Politics is apt to be found in the disagreeing collision of multiple worlds away from our normal, policed understanding of what makes sense. What is normalised by the state as politics is therefore, for Rancière, a state of restriction rather than a fully active platform for the participation of all. Instead, greater potential lies in the realm of "fictions" (Rancière, 2010). A volatile site outside and in excess of police, politics only becomes tangible when certain groups begin to initiate a "reconfiguration" of life:

> What I mean is that politics, rather than the exercise of power or the struggle for power, is the configuration of a specific world, a specific form of experience in which some things appear to be political objects,

> some questions political issues or argumentations and some agents political subjects. I attempted to redefine this 'aesthetic' nature of politics by setting politics not as a specific single world but as a conflictive world: not a world of competing interests or values but a world of competing worlds. (Rancière, 2011, p.11)

Compared to Paulo Freire's humanistic and collaborative project discussed at the beginning of this chapter – which requires a facilitated process of consciousness-raising – Rancière's vision of fictions is rather a "competition" between worlds as they emerge, which encourages a flourishing of dissonance between them. Recalling the loneliness of bodies and counterpublic affect (Warner, 2002; see: 1.1.2.), both Rancière and Warner identify the restrictions of the public space (or a "state of police" via Rancière) and how it enacts the limits against which alternatives can be lived out, formulated. In these generative spaces of counterpublic fictions, other rules, practices, and meanings are able to flourish. But where a counterpublic harnesses resistance from being subordinated, Rancière's fiction is embedded within an aesthetic space that attends to "the equality of speaking beings" (Rancière, 2011, p.14), or to an ideal that is practically impossible in a state of police. Yet a poetic elsewhere is not completely contained from everything that keeps our subjectivities in check. His expanded definition of fiction is as follows:

> It is not a term that designates the imaginary as opposed to the real; it involves the *re-framing* of the 'real', or the framing of a dissensus.

> Fiction is a way of changing existing modes of sensory presentations and forms of enunciation, of varying frames, scales and rhythms; and of building new relationships between reality and appearance, the individual and the collective. (Rancière, 2010, p.141, my emphasis)

For him, fiction contributes towards a "commonsense" by "rearticulating the connections between signs and images, images and times, signs and spaces" (ibid., p.149). In other words, between seeing, hearing, feeling, and the meaning-making is the possibility of rupture, the space wherein art – fiction – must operate. Art then becomes a temporary habitat for enacting different political reveries that, in the end, cannot properly re-enter our policed reality; after all, Rancière's understanding of reality is a "consensus" that, by definition, effaces dissensus (Rancière, 2010, p.144). Because of this, dissensus has to take place elsewhere, e.g. within the aesthetic regime, and poetic forms are in fact non-life forms in their refusal of policed sense-making. It is this very "aesthetic indifference", he reminds us, that must be reiterated in a new "critical art" unconcerned with its own political efficacy (ibid., p.138).

The space of fiction is therefore as limited as it is provocative, seeing how its liberties are coupled with its non-realised status. But in distancing himself from politics as a struggle for power, Rancière is more focused on the dissensual multiplicity of fiction in which art is most political when it shows no pretence of the political. That way, Rancière's "emancipated spectator" (Rancière, 2009) is able to rupture the connection between what they sense

and the meaning construed; the safe zone of fiction enables dissent to take place. What of the permeability of this space though? The fact that it "re-frames" and does not "oppose" the real suggests a certain susceptibility. There are indeed some considerations of such negotiation found in his earlier text "Disagreement" (1995), in which he describes a "surplus subject". Conceived as a figure external *and* responsive to an ongoing discussion, the surplus subject can be used to unsettle the boundaries of fiction more explicitly. While Rancière means for it to embody "the point at which the logos *splits*" and "what can be thought of specifically as politics" (Rancière, 1995, pp.xii-xiii, my emphasis), the surplus subject is just as applicable to his understanding of fiction. Arguably, fiction is a "split" as well, with resonances of the third space adherence to and splitting from norms (see: 1.1.1.). He explains:

> The play of the third person is essential to the logic of political discussion, which is never simple dialogue. It is always both less and more: less, for it is always in the form of a monologue that the dispute, the gap internal to the logos, declares itself, and more, for commentary sets off a multiplication of persons. (Rancière, 1995, p.48)

The surplus subject specifically disrupts the pendulating to-and-fro movement between two interlocuting points. The addition of this crucial third person position embodies a dissensual polyphony that questions order, authority, and normativising demands. In other words, it is able to see and say something that neither interlocutor is capable of. The following is an extract from the

Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.) manifesto from 2008 which puts the role of the surplus subject into context:

> W.A.G.E. (WORKING ARTISTS AND THE GREATER ECONOMY) WORKS TO DRAW ATTENTION TO ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES THAT EXIST IN THE ARTS, AND TO RESOLVE THEM.
> W.A.G.E. HAS BEEN FORMED BECAUSE WE, AS VISUAL + PERFORMANCE ARTISTS AND INDEPENDENT CURATORS, PROVIDE A WORK FORCE (W.A.G.E., 2008).

By speaking of the collective from the outside and taking it as a third person, W.A.G.E. artists are both present (as themselves) and represented (by referring to themselves externally) as a delegate, to whom the group attributes power while owning it at the same time. In terms of Rancière's surplus subject, being *present* and at the same time *representing* is "both less and more": it is speculative *and* it breathes life; it questions the constraints of "we", "you", or "they" into new forms of identification, counterpublics, etc.; it is a mechanism that redirects the speaker, the addressee, as well as the act. In this particular case, the third person surplus and singular plural subjects enact other possibilities by venturing into a fictional, collectively lived presence. Regarding the complications of "we" in statements like the above W.A.G.E. manifesto, it is "[n]either the *we* or the identity assigned to it, nor the apposition of the two", but rather

> modes of subjectification only in the set of relationships that the *we*

> and its *name* maintain with the set of 'persons,' the complete play of identities and alterities implicated in the demonstration and the worlds – common or separate – where these are defined. (Rancière, 1995, p.59)

The playfulness opens up the possibility of reconstituting who "we" are, thus highlighting how Rancière's dissensus is emergent, negotiated. By resituating his surplus subject into his argument for fiction, a more permeable understanding of his aesthetic regime is brought to light. The multiplicity of subjects in competing, frictive processes of reconfiguration then resonates widely, including in Chantal Mouffe's reflections on agonistic art practices (2007; 2013). She is concerned with the "the fostering of new social relations" in a co-generated public space "where conflicting points of view are confronted without any possibility of a final reconciliation" (Mouffe, 2013, p.92). Her agonistics depend on this "discursively constructed" criticality that veers away from the assessment of political efficacy, and instead asks how the "common sense" (also found in Rancière's writing) is made and remade (ibid., p.90). Of note in Mouffe's assessment is how art is capable of moving us and of attending to desire, which parallels the affective dimension that is inseparable from this study's focus on embodiment (see: chapter three on the political ramifications of love). "From the point of view of the theory of hegemony", she argues, "artistic practices play a role in the constitution and maintenance of a given symbolic order" (ibid., p.91). As such, their role in the formation of subjectivity comes from the friction of unsettling norms and, crucially for this study, from the dissimilarities between the practices

themselves. If the notion of dialogue suggests an all-too compliant position with dominant discourse, then what I propose in this chapter is the nourishing of other, dissenting subjectivities that alert us to alternative possibilities.

To end, we can consider Rancière's critique of a particular project by the French-Australian collective of artists and architects Urban Encampment (*Campement Urbain*) called *I and Us* (*Je & Nous*, 2003-2008). The group carves out a place of solitude in the middle of a satellite Parisian town called Sevran, which was built in the 1970s for immigrants primarily from around North Africa. For Rancière, the deliberate suspense materialised by the contemplative space is in itself a crucial aspect of an aesthetic sensibility that permits "embracing" as much as "splitting" (Rancière, 2008) – the latter of which hearkens not only to his surplus subject, but is also found in the enunciated third space (Bhabha, 1994; see: 1.1.1.) of cultural reiteration and innovation. However, as it has been discussed earlier, Rancière tendency is to insist upon the fiction of dissensus, of a non-existent "paper life" (Rancière, 2011, p.13). Its presence is first and foremost only ever in conditional terms, never breaking into everyday experience (Rancière, 2008, p.9). As much as *I and Us* is a situated art project, it paradoxically takes part within its surroundings by being separate from it. Quoting the artist group, the space was meant to be "extremely useless, fragile and non-productive" which, for Rancière, perfectly embodies that rupture of art: in "constructing a place for solitude, an 'aesthetic' place appears as a task for engaged art" (Rancière, 2008). However, François Daune offers the following explanation in an interview about the project with art and architecture scholars Peter

Mörtenböck and Helge Mooshammer:

> We proposed creating an object where an individual could be alone but that would be everyone's responsibility at the same time. All the communities would take care of the object while allowing people to get away from their respective communities. In other words, people entering the object exit their communities. This means their communities have to accept that they're taking (an individual) time out when they go away and stay there. It's a place that might be able to trigger new practices. Though, since the project is the responsibility of the community, it exists only as long as people agree to keep the physical object intact. They have to discuss how to do this, how to use it, maintain it and so on. *If discussion stops, the object will disappear*. So discussing the meaning of such a space actually constitutes its beginning. (Campement Urbain, 2008, my emphasis)

This is where Rancière's idea of an aesthetic dissensual community becomes difficult, for this space of possibilities is in fact *made* to exist, and is not merely a guarded territory that subsequently allows things to take place. The emphasis turns to the discursive performativity between bodies and how they create or destroy objects / potentials through negotiation, a situated process that is largely overlooked in Rancière's reflections on art and politics as dissensus. Recalling Mouffe's co-existing artistic agonisms, this particular space has to be discursively produced and maintained. Rancière later clarifies his thinking in his 2011 essay by stating that "the truth about the Truth can

only be told as myth", which is something he "*refuse[s] to ontologize*" (Rancière, 2011, p.15, my emphasis). This, he contends, is what underpins aesthetics, politics, and philosophy: none of them can be successfully given a form. Yet a project such as *I and Us* clearly makes something – a physical place – out of fiction's social performativity, ushering other forms of life that are tangible even if only momentarily, continuing to exert some kind of influence even after they disappear. Even though the result is an aesthetic break, or an "exit" from "communities" as the artist says, it is still a space within life, and it is one that is brought to life through discursive negotiation.

It can be said, as Rancière argues, that "critical" art practices must always fall short of delivering actual political change. What they do in the context of this study's socially negotiated art is explore and speculate, freely associating imaginations of different subjectivities. As examined above, this negotiation is also materially constitutive of a political reality that breaks into new ground. Socially negotiated art is, at its best, as committed to testing the material restrictions of reality as it is to nurturing non-life forms of fiction; as serious about the failures of the real as the imagining of new possibilities. The "socially negotiated" element then involves the critical consideration of embodied, physical experience that breathes meaning into flourishing and livability. In supplementing Rancière's dissensus with embodiment, I am seeking and marking out a communicative and relational possibility for a permeable yet frictive socially negotiated art; the very "I and us" only ever come-to-be performed through social contact, yielding, and resistance. In the next section, two art projects are described and examined (2.2.1.). They each

demonstrate in different ways how dialogue fails to achieve discursive equality between speakers. The intention is to understand the hopes and difficulties of dialogue when it is sought in practice, which leads to the question of other possibilities if dialogue is, in fact, not the answer. The breakdown of the two projects are then followed by the analysis of two frictive forms of speech – gossip and teasing – that argue for their counterpublic and epistemic potential (2.2.2.).

2.2. Dislocating dialogue: two socially negotiated art projects and two frictive modes of speech

In "Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy" (2001), feminist writer Iris Marion Young attempts to portray two characters "in dialogue" with one another: a deliberative democrat and an activist. Below are some notable traits that she assigns to each:

> The deliberative democrat thinks that the best way to limit political domination and the naked imposition of partisan interest and to promote greater social justice through public policy is to foster the creation of sites and processes of deliberation among diverse and disagreeing elements of the polity. […] Through critical argument that is open to the point of view of others, she aims to arrive at policy conclusions freely acceptable by all involved. (Young, 2001, p.672)

> The activist opposes particular actions or policies of public or private institutions, as well as systems of policies or actions, and wants them changed. Sometimes he also demands positive policies and action to reduce injustice or harm. […] Often activists make public noise outside when deliberation is supposedly taking place on the inside. Sometimes activists invade the houses of deliberation and disrupt their business by unfurling banners, throwing stink bombs, or running and shouting through the aisles. (ibid., p.673)

Though the descriptions convey two political characters as if they could only be separate, Young's essay brought forth many overlapping intentions and concerns harboured by both. What tears them apart into two characters is the different evaluations they have on being reasonable, where on the one hand it is indispensable (for implementing policies) and on the other, it is impossible (when discussion is based on false premises). This once again points toward discursive conditions – e.g. where, how, why is this exchange taking place – and how they can complicitly legitimate the power imbalances that the activist calls out, struggles against. Young's definition of deliberation, in light of the chapter so far, reflects the desire for an idealised, rationally argued dialogue, while her activist speech interrupts the implicit normativising processes that dialogue demands. Yet this delineation of the "deliberative" and "activist" tends to portray the latter as a reaction to dominant order, which in itself is also crucial. But given this study's emphasis on negotiation as a generative space, it is important to examine speech modes that do something other than rationally deliberate an issue or disrupt discussions.

This chapter section (2.2.) proposes a different, more multiple understanding of non-dialogical types of communication. This means turning to speech that deviate from deliberation and activism as opposite poles, resulting in something altogether more ambiguous. To do so, the second half of chapter two is focused on refracting egalitarian presumptions of dialogue in two ways: firstly, by looking at how dialogue is explicitly pursued and denied as a relational device in two art projects by Ania Bas (2012) and Anthony Schrag (2015) respectively; secondly, by examinng two intimate forms of speech that both defy and comply with reason as well as disruption. Specific to this study's context, such negotiability is described as the frictive. In examining speech *in situ*, the art and speech analyses show how spoken negotiation function as critical, investigative sites; they are reflections produced through a kind of dissent that, following performance studies scholar Shannon Jackson, enact the "co-imbrication" between art and the "props" – the bodies and situations – that support it (Jackson, 2011). I then turn my attention to two types of speech that are generally trivialised and overlooked – gossip and teasing. Doing so is an attempt to argue for a mutuality that is based on the exclusivity of marginalised identities, and to advocate a more intimate in-group circulation and evaluation of knowledge. To do so, I refer to two modes of speech: gossip, which is positioned as a social, feminist epistemology that runs parallel to more official undertakings of research; and teasing, with an examination of works by poet and performance artist Marlon Riggs to explore the use of play-aggression as queer bonding and critique. The aim here is to emphasise modes of communication that are built upon their markers of

difference. By highlighting these multiple, variable moments of the spoken, I seek to reinvigorate them as part of an affectively robust and complex space wherein the social is less presumptuously *engaged* and differently *negotiated*.

2.2.1. Undoing the "dialogical" in two socially negotiated art projects

This section examines two art projects in which the following are explored: 1. dialogue is highlighted as a tool for exploring situated narratives and identities; and 2. agonistic measures are used to bypass dialogue and invite more honest thoughts with regards to differences (especially those related to hidden power relations). The former demonstrates an earnest attempt to establish mutual communication, while the latter employs aspects of agonism and dissent that are concepts explored in the earlier part of this chapter. Artist Ania Bas uses conversation to establish and facilitate the relations in her *I Love PX* (2012) project, while Anthony Schrag employs group play as a means of problematising universal inclusivity. Bas's project grew around a commission from Yorkshire Artspace (YAS) to understand the possibilities of an artist in the process of "urban regeneration". As such, the trajectory of the project depended on the making and sustaining of conversations over the course of the one-year residency. Schrag's work, rather, debunks the working relations between artists, participants, and institutions, which finds shape in a series of different artistic actions related to physical contact, endurance, and confrontational encounters. As such, Bas assumed the role of incomer-cum-

temporary delegate, whereas Schrag consciously embodied disruption in order to put to test the boundaries that keep bodies and institutions apart.

I Love PX – Ania Bas, 2012

In Bas's project, the challenge lay in being a nomad, i.e. an itinerant stranger, whose task was to figure out her place in Sheffield's working class suburb of Parson Cross. Invited as an outsider-artist, she is asked to weave herself within the life of the neighbourhood. According to Rachael Dodd, Programme Manager for the YAS, the residency was based on the following question: "what role can artists and art play in a neighbourhood?" and that "it was about building networks and relationships, engaging people, and creating work in relation to the social context" (Dodd, 2015, pers. comm., 27 April). Any response to that hinged upon a process of familiarisation, both in terms of the artist settling into the area and vice versa. The main challenges included figuring out her indeterminate role and accorded power (as an artistic "expert"), which was done in gradual stages of immersion and careful negotiation. As it unfolded, blogging and talking with people face to face ended up being the main means of reflection and reaching out respectively. By the end of the residency, a co-authored book was also produced.

Bas was brought in from the outside – a "nomadic" artist (Kwon, 2001) – and as part of her brief, she had to situate herself within a locality with which she had no prior connection. This means orienting oneself in a number of ways,

including getting to know the street names, the landmarks, and the social spaces specific to Parson Cross, as well as the psychogeography associated with place. This entanglement of place, people, and meaning exists in embodied relation with one another, which cannot be easily accessed over a short span of time. During the residency, she opted for an "easing in" approach that would introduce her (in)to the area. Armed with a bright blue chair, she talked with passers-by who were curious about why she was there. It became her "signature action and silent announcement of [her] presence":

> A gentleman who lives by the island approached me to check "What is all of this about?" He found it weird that it was all about sitting, reading and enjoying the green spot. I was directed towards the park that had "millions spent on it" and surely must be a better spot to enjoy greenery and fresh air. (Bas, 2012)

Her observations, questions, aims, and doubts were all recorded onto a blog in a diaristic manner. It was a self-reflexive process in which research, preparation, and reflection all took place beside one another. The blog entries tell her readers how she passed a few months "brewing" while being out with her blue chair and talking to people; they also tell us that a book of fictions was published towards the end of the residency. It contained the texts of those who took part at the writing workshops and tours that she organised. The workshops were attended by residents as well as art colleagues, although most of the writing contribution was done by the former. Relaxed and informal, an author from the area also came to talk about his own work based

on local history. The book presents a cross-section of written records that range from (fictionalised?) postcard correspondence to lyrics of adolescent angst ("Burping lasses chewing gum, dirty pavements, human scum"). Yet they only indicate towards the conversations and interpersonal relations that Bas navigated and established with the authors. Deliberately included are highly critical letters in which the artist is directly addressed. One of the local residents and book contributors, Mary Small, used the opportunity to voice her distress at "urban regeneration" consultations:

> I still don't feel heard and all I want is for people from outside the neighbourhood to stop judging us. If you don't live here, you will never understand the complexity of the estate. It might not be a perfect place, but are there perfect places? […] I want you to start taking responsibility for what you write, how you make people feel and what you make them believe in. *Stop telling us what to think, stop telling us how to live, stop telling us what we need*. What we lack is not dignity but a rightful respect towards us from others. (Small, in Bas, 2013, p.81, my emphasis)

The process of "talking through" has been interpreted as intrusive, as a threat to the neighbourhood itself. Indeed, negotiation needs to account for disagreement (see: 2.1.3. on the importance of dissent), as dissatisfaction, resentment, and misunderstandings also arise from Bas's efforts to achieve greater proximity. Small's reflection shows how the intention of dialogical encounters can go awry, if the "intention" presupposes a possibility of

mutuality, of openness to engagement. In Bas's own words:

> [There were] no long-term connections to the area, no solid base. I was trying to build that for myself. [But] there's thirty years of bad memories and still affects reality now. I didn't know that when I came in. (Bas, 2016, pers. comm., 16 February)

The displacement of an artist in a foreign environment or – more literally – the speech acts between Bas and those she meets (residents, shopkeepers, commissioners, etc.) cannot be adequately addressed through "dialogue". Words uttered over the finite lifespan of a project may not be able to shed light on things that are hard to surface – on the "bad memories" of a place, for instance – nor do they convey the difficulties and emotional awkwardness of Bas's immersion process, of navigating how much to share, and of having to deal with potential backlash.

While Bas's residency was a commissioned project that was concerned with the exploration of connections and relationships in a particular locality, its infrastructural support of partners (which include Arts Council England and the Housing Market Renewal Scheme) were rather absent from the production process. However, certain texts in the "I Love PX" publication articulated the residents' anger on the changes made in the area:

> Currently we are under a North Sheffield regeneration programme designed to improve our wellbeing and boost our self-esteem as well

> as bring cappuccinos and organic cakes to the local cafes. And again I can't help but feel frustrated. Someone in between the lines, in a clever way that I am not meant to see, is telling me that we are not sophisticated enough, that we should be aiming higher but not too high. (Small in Bas, 2013, p.81)

The "nomadic artist", in this case, ends up critically reflecting upon the (exoticised) alterity that her art commissioners had hoped to instrumentalise as part of "urban regeneration", a term that glosses over the sanitisation and paternalistic reimagination of a neighbourhood: "I fit into so many boxes for people, being the [Polish] foreigner, the other, the middle-class woman" (Bas, 2016, pers. comm., 16 February). In answering the question "what role can artists and art play in a neighbourhood?" posed by YAS, Bas's afterthoughts revolve around what she calls the "protective barriers" that must be erected for her own emotional preservation on the one hand, and for institutional accountability as well on the other. There must be some evidence of established, trusted contact between programme commissioners and local partners; after all, the artist's relationship with a neighbourhood is in many ways predetermined by the commissioner's own situatedness within it. At the time, YAS's key presence in the area was three consecutive one-year art residencies. Without any other meaningful representation in the area, the responsibility of "building partnerships" (Dodd, 2015, pers. comm., 27 April) was effectively outsourced to artists like Bas. It leaves the artist, the neighbourhood, and YAS in a precarious relationship with one another. By the end of this project, the conversations nurtured with residents and the related

attempt of the commissioner to play a part in the neighbourhood have engendered some important points of resistance, enacting the limits of dialogue and horizontality.

Drama for Life: Participatory Performances – Anthony Schrag, 2014

As part of a simultaneous set of nine residencies taking place across the continents of Europe and Africa ("Nine Urban Biotopes", supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union), Schrag was selected to work with a Johannesburg-based organisation called Drama for Life (DFL) "that sought to enact social change via Applied Drama and Drama Therapy" (Schrag, 2015b, p.47). Over a period of three months, Schrag performed and produced almost thirty different actions and events that "explore the place of such institutions as tools for social transformation and change, seeking to create public events and projects that playfully explore social conflict" (Nine Urban Biotopes, 2014). He was originally assigned to work with six MA theatre students as well as "community" participants over the course of his stay, but he soon began to question the entire framework of the residency, most notably: 1. their disagreement on what constitutes a "community" (for DFL, it is an "area" within a city; for Schrag, it is a specific group of people that are "together" for complex reasons); 2. DFL's instrumentalisation of his practice for uncritical "social betterment". From this position of disagreement, Schrag produced a number of works that elicited conflict as a disruptive form of negotiation that functions contrary to the logic of even-tempered, egalitarian

dialogue. The starting point of Schrag's practice, then, is the confrontation of irreconciliation. Rather than locating a common ground, he prefers an approach that generates "slightly mean" but "productive conflict[s]" that are capable of "critiqu[ing] intention by challenging how someone is doing something" (Schrag, 2015, pers. comm., 5 March). As such, there is a need to focus more closely on one of his many actions during the residency to explore the frictive and practical applications of conflict.

For the work *Racist* (2015), Schrag – a white, foreign artist – sought out the reactions of others by wearing a badge that said "RACIST" on it for a week. The people who approached him generally wanted to ask about the sign, which would lead to discussions about what racism entailed; whether it was found in a person or in their actions; and how it was possible that one was never racist. He remarks, "I wore the sign that declared me a racist for a week and noticed only non-white people approached the topic" (Schrag, 2015b, p.50). This particular observation is key: why did only "non-white people" attempt to challenge Schrag? Taken to mean black South Africans primarily, is it because they are not as easily caught off-guard by his statement? Or that there is little incrimination? Given that racism pervades both explicitly and structurally, how differently do white and black South Africans feel about it as a topic of dissent / conversation? Of course, Schrag's sign is meant to incite and demand attention. But importantly, it is a white person going public and owning his racism. Current cultural standards of the West no longer tolerate jarring displays of racism, which has only made its proliferation all the more insidious and frustrating. To see a white stranger

call himself a "RACIST" is therefore alarming, not because of disgust – racism is old news, after all – but because he has come out of the racist closet. In turn, this marks Schrag as a potential ally of a broader counterpublic that at least wants to recognise racism. For black South Africans, this agonistic move of conflict-seeking could possibly make him a more suitable candidate of meaningful conversation, the kind – paradoxically – that dialogue might hope to achieve.

But what about the reaction of white South Africans? Surely, his candid admission to racism is perceived as offensive to the dominant cultural narrative that is already done with Apartheid. Yet this self-congratulatory perspective leaves many white South Africans without the wherewithal to confront the racism that still affect black South Africans. The unfortunate result is partly demonstrated in Schrag's project: silence from white people, perhaps out of guilt or defensive outrage, out of disbelief that they should (still) be accused. In the context of this chapter, this inability to deal with racism is intimately linked to the egalitarian principles of dialogue. When confronted with the aggressively frictive language that also names your complicity, everything you know is put into question. Faced with Schrag's "RACIST" sign, the illusion of "equality" pandered by the dominant cultural narrative is broken: his own admission of injustice is an inverse reflection of your own negligence, dragging your guilt to light. It is the dumbfounded discomfort of the white South Africans that is most telling: the disengagement, the feeling of disorientation, incrimination, and being on the back foot, all of which conspire against their access to dialogue. Where does

that leave them now that they no longer have the privilege or the power to engage in rational "dialogue"? Funnily, Schrag says, "By arranging a situation, I create an excuse to have a dialogue" (Schrag, 2015, pers. comm., 5 March) – or, more precisely in the language of this chapter, a frictively generated exchange arising out of dissent. As it turns out, Schrag's racist "situation" is both an affirmative conversation starter *and* an uncomfortable calling out that takes away presumed innocence from white voices. By raising the question of race in what he calls a "slightly mean" way, Schrag sheds light on the impossibility of dialogue, of the vast disparity that still needs to be addressed.

In fully exploring the embodied experience of the relational processes with which artists like Bas and Schrag are involved, disagreements, confrontation, and silences – not egalitarian dialogue – need to be better highlighted as generative sites of new ideas. Reiterating the "props" mentioned at the start of this chapter section, Jackson argues in "Social Works" (2011) for a more conscious and complicit display of the interdependencies between art and its supportive structures – thus "props". For her, it is less to do with the "revealing [of] the reality" and mechanisms that enable art and life, but "to find in that exposure evidence of their intimate and ever-shifting co-imbrication" (Jackson, 2011, p.149). She attempts to undo the tendency to dichotomise social efficacy and critical, aesthetic merit by highlighting the unresolvable tension that exists between the work of art and the work *to make* the art (ibid., p.92). While her argument takes the form of highly choreographed installations, performative actions, as well as collaborative theatre projects, the goal here is to forefront the actual conversations – the

maintenance conversational work as well as negotiations with dissatisfaction that led to the co-authored book in Bas's *I Love PX*; the confrontational provocation and occasions for meaningful exchange in Schrag's *Racist* – as vitally demonstrative of the co-dependence / "co-imbrication" of art and the heteronomy of life. Frictive speech as refusal and as multi-dimensional ways of seizing, reclaiming, and manipulating power must be better accounted for in a socially negotiated art.

2.2.2. The intimacy of gossip and the play-aggression of teasing

So far, this chapter has explored different facets of dialogue that began with Freire's activist interpretation of it – equal participation in an open playing field of "co-naming" – which later dissolved into the difficulties of achieving this within the heteronomous experiences of life. Against the disembodiment of the Habermasian public sphere, Michael Warner reminds us how "the possibilities of public or private speech are distorted" (Warner, 2002, p.52) for those who do not fit within an invisible body standard of "white, male, literate, and propertied" (ibid., p.166). Limited by the impossibility of dialogue and the subsequent loss of public speech means at the same time the cultivation of alternative speech and social vernacular in counterpublic circles to create discursive spaces supported by different political affects. Warner borrows from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's reflections on speech and the assumption of intimate knowledge in "what goes without saying; what can be

said without breach of decorum; who shares the onus of disclosure; what can be known about a person's real nature through telltale signs, without his or her own awareness; who bears the consequences of speech and silence" (ibid., p.52).

This section (2.2.2.) now puts forward two particular verbal forms that are capable of forging other senses of solidarity and self-reflexivity. It may seem tempting to work backwards along a spectrum of speech types to locate something between dialogue and conflict, but this imagined gradation undermines other ways of speaking by always already pitting them against dialogue as the optimum. Rejecting the prejudice implicit in this sliding scale opens up a wider, more serious engagement with different communicative possibilities that are otherwise underestimated and thus underexamined. While Iris Marion Young's activist approach may be a reaction to the deliberative in democracy, it provides important clues to the attitudes one can *also* assume in speech: determination, defiance, irreverence. It questions the failure of dialogue by *refusing* to dialogue, for the conditions that enable it are simply not there. Rather than settling for a compensatory alternative, it is necessary to move away from the parameters that lock down our thinking with dialogue as the locus and instead, draw upon the confidence that exudes from Young's activist interjection: one that embraces its own contingency and thrives in experimental dissent. With this conviction in mind, the argument now turns to the extended web of communication that exists somewhere *beside* the deliberative and activist, or what this study has been emphasising as the frictive. This is perhaps best characterised by its recuperation of

intimate, embodied entanglements, which stands in stark contrast to the consensual co-naming of dialogue. The frictive garners a different connection that would scarcely be considered "generative" or "reflective" at first glance. The intention is to analyse how two variants of verbal forms – gossip and teasing – typically dismissed by serious researchers need to be recalibrated into sites of queer and feminist intimacy and knowledge. In both cases, the social and epistemological potential is highlighted in order to examine, following Mouffe (2013), its "discursively constructed criticality".

Gossip

In the groundbreaking study "Women's Ways of Knowing" (1986), Belenky et al. propose a series of methods by which women in various conditions of social and political subjugation come to know the(ir) world(s). They determine five basic methods, each of which are attached to the relative severity / absence of sex-based oppression. Noticeably absent is any deeper analysis of gossip – appearing only tangentially in the section on "procedural knowledge" of the "connected" kind, which is the closest comparative to the sociality that is explored here. Focused as their study is on delivering a counterargument to the male-dominated approaches on epistemic development, the co-authors reactively overlook gossip as a site of serious meaning-making. They do, however, define it generously:

> Gossip concerns the personal, the particular, and frequently the petty;

> but it does not follow that it is a trivial activity. […] The explicit information gossipers share concerns the behavior of other people; but, implicitly, gossipers tell each other about themselves by showing how they interpret the information they share. (Belenky et al., 1986, p.116)

In other words, gossip has an evaluative function built into its processes of information sharing. But in choosing to highlight the element of "trust" and "understanding" of gossip, Belenky et al. strip the "petty" of its power, given that "[connected knowers'] purpose is *not to judge* but to *understand*" (ibid., my emphasis). The co-authors therefore refuse the evaluative power of dissent and friction that do, in fact, result from gossip. Tellingly, this short mention ends up being a small component of a larger epistemological framework – connected knowing – in which women arrive at knowledge by perceiving life from other points of view (ibid., p.115). As such, the argument relies on the abstinence of judgement in favour of "empathy", "forbearance", "subjectivity", etc. that the co-authors rework as radical attitudes of system-breaking (ibid., p.128).

While this chapter's renegotiation of dialogue can be aligned beside Belenky's et al.'s connected knowing, it does not neglect the critical, evaluative quality of "being petty"; doing so would relent to the bad reputation of gossip that rules out a more affective analysis. Feminist philosopher Karen Adkins's 2002 study on gossip specifically locates it beside "official" routes of knowledge like academic research, purposely citing an all-male example from the world of

science in the late-1960s to illustrate the use of gossip. As two rival groups of scientists compete in an "international chase for the structure of DNA", they fully engage with "the power of gossip to turn people on or off research roads", as "informal reports on others is in fact a critical way of keeping tabs on scientific thinking" (Adkins, 2002, p.224). Adkins's argument, then, is that gossip produces knowledge that is not peripheral to institutional knowledge, but rather is at least as crucial as the latter. More relevant yet to this study is her argument on the role and perception of gossip in the western historical context (Adkins, 2017). In her recent publication, she reclaims gossip within the feminist fold not only as one possible mode of knowing, but as a challenge of epistemological norms.

She resituates gossip's critical capacity by, firstly, looking at the historical use of the word — "godsibbe", or "god-sibling", connoting a person who performed intimate as well as public roles for a family. A gossip, then, has always been a close cohort. Secondly, she notes the change in the word's usage and meaning some time in the sixteenth century, moving from a noun to a verb. Adkins contends that this has to do with the rise of print culture, which resulted in a "devalu[ation] of orality" as well as "collective authorship in theology, science, and the law" (Adkins, 2017, p.24). She elaborates:

> At the very moment when print is attaining dominance as authority, challenges to its status are intrusive, and an obstacle to the spread of the values of print culture. Gossip, the rhetorical heckler and trickster, can hobble pompous public pronouncements. Private whisperings can

> render public restrictions impotent. It seems like more than coincidence to me that the word gossip becomes lexically devalued in the century after print culture and literacy become widespread. Cordoning off gossip as trivial, probably false, malicious, and the talk of (ignorant or spiteful) women minimizes the effect of *gossip as a critical act*. (ibid., p.25, my emphasis)

Taking this claim to task, she follows up with a deliberate intermingling of gossip beside her scholarly critique. In her examination of Kierkegaard's argument against gossip and its propensity to bleed into "proper" thought, Adkins spends just as much time recounting his public tussles with colleagues and "scandal sheets", while also bringing our attention to the "Good-Natured Gossipy Remarks" of personal criticisms against him that he in fact hoarded and stashed away (ibid., p.36). She gossips as part of her analysis in order to demonstrate what it means to consider the lived experiences of a philosopher as part of one's reflections on their intellectual work. By putting Kierkegaard's actions in frictive contact with his thoughts, Adkins constructs a different, delightfully rounded perspective wherein there is no implicit hierarchy of importance when it comes to the information shared *about* as well as *beside* his thoughts; the fact that he was in every way disturbed and interested in what people said about him is not incidental but complementary to his work, enabling a perspective that is otherwise (literally and physically) hidden away from his writing.

In context of socially negotiated art practices, gossip functions in a similarly

robust manner that cannot be divorced from the artistic and relational processes. To work this through, we can turn to a project by Annette Krauss called *Hidden Curriculum* (2007-2015). Interested in the ways that spaces and bodies are disciplined within a school environment, Krauss worked in conjunction with a group of 15 to 17-year-old pupils to "investigate forms of learning in school" which includes "possibilities to address informal knowledge, unrecognized and undesired learning in the context of institutionalised normalization processes" (Art Discover, 2013). In thinking about where the force of gossip lies, it became apparent that informal conversations make use of the same informal spaces that are the gaps and blindspots of disobedient behaviour (whispers, scrawled obscenities on desks, note-passing, smoking in the bathroom, etc.) in schools. A huge part of the project hinged upon Krauss's ability to earn some measure of trust with the pupils, such that they would be willing to let her in on the hidden / private aspects of school life. She occupied the ambivalent position of being an adult of some authority, but not of the kind that the pupils are normally used to with their teachers. This gave her room to manoeuvre, though she admits that what is ultimately compiled – how to be "invisible" in school; how to rock chairs (which is generally not allowed in lessons) in a group; how to go up and down a set of stairs; etc. – does not represent the full extent of their undertaking. Some of the information – or "secrets", as the pupils called them – were not divulged in the project's documentation precisely because of the way in which gossip is negotiated. In an interview with fellow artists Hannah Jickling and Helen Reed, she notes:

> Going back to the issue of the students' secrets, we felt the urge to create an agreement and framework for discussing these secrets in public without necessarily revealing them. The pupils suggested the so-called Hidden Curriculum Archive. It is a way to collect the secret actions and practices that they use in order to face the requirements and institutional structures of school. This archive has two sections: one is public, parts of which became the *Hidden Curriculum Files,* and one is strictly confidential – students would always discuss which section of the archive these secrets would enter. In this way both parts are always under discussion. But also the logistics of the archive, the travelling of one workshop series to another brings challenging questions: for example, in order to bring the project to other groups of students, we agreed that I would only do this if there was *not* another teacher present. My part in this was, and always is, very difficult and it's never really resolved, it's a paradox. (Krauss, Jickling and Reed, 2013)

The paradox lies in the delicate balancing act of trust and transgression, in having a conspiratorial relationship with the pupils that her co-operating and commissioning institutions cannot enter.

Indeed, we come to an unavoidable convergence of secrets and gossip. Secrets, once revealed (whether intentionally or not), become the stuff of gossip: private information finding itself in the domain of a selective public. As slippery and fact-shifting as it is apt to be, gossip cannot be possessed or

disciplined, taking on a spatiality that exceeds the speakers; it is prone to spreading beyond the control of the gossip participants and potentially cause social and reputational harm to those involved, i.e. turn into scandal (Merry in Klein, 1997). While the focus of this examination is to look at gossip via a feminist take of knowledge production and sharing, its informality permits disorderly behaviour and assessment that are hard to control. This slipperiness primes gossip for its bad reputation and allows "a pathology of space" (Sontag, 1978, p.23) to form around it. In Susan Sontag's "Illness as Metaphor", she objects to established cultural similes that use cancer to describe an uncontainable threat or danger. The pathologisation, she notes, prohibits a more direct and healthy acknowledgement of the illness (ibid.). Gossip is also similarly pathologised at the social level, destructive and invasive as it can be to the status of individuals. It homes into and teases out discrepancies, "particularly lapses between claims to reputation and reports about actual behavior" (Merry in Klein, 1997, p.53). Gossip therefore has the ability to generate, reinforce, and question moral positionings, which gives it the power to determine spatiality by tentatively defining and changing the borders of (counterpublic) in-groups. Being in the know is one way of belonging, but *how* you value or understand a piece of gossip are markers of a more intimate kind of membership. Returning to Ahmed's "nodal point in the [affective] economy" (2004), the knowledge within gossip turns into a surface around which bodies gather and, at the same time, becomes a potential site for the forming of counterpublics (see: 1.1.2.). Gossip must therefore be recognised for its social workings in order to be better understood as an epistemology. Anthropologist Sally Engle Merry observes

that gossip is "a useful idiom for demonstrating relative intimacy and distance [that] flourishes in close-knit, highly connected social networks but atrophies in loose-knit, unconnected ones" (Merry in Klein, 1997, p.52). It can ascertain or ruin one's standing within a social cluster. As Adkins argues, gossip is evaluative, critical work that offers "a rich vein of unofficial trust and reputation being checked, and granted" (Adkins, 2017, p.64). As such, gossip is a dissenting type of speech that pulls together at the same time as it repels bodies. It enacts group belonging through playful, intimate, and frictive speech that simultaneously (re-)iterates a group's social norms.

Artists like Krauss who are interested in pursuing a more conspiratorial trust and closeness rather than eliciting dialogue understand, even if implicitly in her examination of secrets, the social and artistic value of the pupils' gossip; it is a queerly feminist action of counterpublic strength and self-reflexive criticality, which, whether we recognise it or not, is already crucial to the life of socially negotiated art. As it has been argued here, gossip's associations with pointless and idle chatter has historically relegated it to irrelevance. This means its reclamation as a site of evaluative knowledge-making is especially important for a socially negotiated art that insists on queer and feminist embodiments, for it is a relationally generated epistemology that is at the same time the taking-stock of relational trust and transgression. To cite artist Hannah Black's feminist portrayal of the gossip:

> The gossip, like the witch, was persecuted as if she were an outlaw, instead of at the heart of her community. Her superpower is hanging

> out – giving, sharing, spending and wasting time together; she provides material for this activity. She brings news, warnings, and information. Worlds appear from her big mouth. (Black, 2017, p.109)

While these key relational components – trust and transgression, secrets and gossip – have been artistically exploited in a project like *Hidden Curriculum*, they have yet to assume a clearer, more demonstrative role; put more directly, a queerly informed socially negotiated art would own up to its dependence on informal learning channels and centre the affective, epistemological, and critical values of gossip against patriarchal assumptions of more horizontal, dialogical speech forms. Gossip offers a frictive, conspiratorial means of constituting the relational material within art practices by posing a sideways challenge to the authority of dialogue and enabling a self-reflexivity that is insufficiently encouraged in the art form.

Teasing

Teasing is yet another frictive act of intimacy that is performed within a group and, like gossip, is a means of evaluating membership. Selected here for its moral ambiguity, teasing is most often associated with young people as well as with parent-child relationships. In practice, teasing involves "intentional provocation accompanied by playful off-record markers that together comment on something relevant to the target" (Keltner, Capps, Kring, Young, and Heerey, 2001, p.234). In a widely-cited empirical study done on teasing,

Keltner et al. note the use of "off-record markers" that couch the "playful aggression" in the verbal use of tone, idioms, and hints on the one hand and non-verbal use of exaggerated facial expressions (e.g. winking) or gestures and mimicry on the other (ibid., p.235-236). There are also prosodic uses of sighing, pitch, volume, etc. to demonstrate that what is being said, is just teasing (ibid.). A noted characteristic of teasing is how its supposed playfulness is delivered by what appears to be antagonism. This turns the speech and its accompanying gestural cues into a blow of sorts, whereby its effect as pain or pleasure is left open to interpretation. It is further suggested that the presence of off-record markers is able to mediate the perceived hostility of the teasing. Yet they do not guarantee the diffusion of the aggression, so blurry are the lines between that and play. In thinking through what prompts teasing in the first place, the researchers of the study are interested in finding out whether interpersonal conflict prompts teasing or vice versa. This question illustrates how the act hovers between attack and conciliation, communicating something that is an ambiguous mixture of the two. The effect it has on the recipient is incalculable; it can take a sharp, sudden turn to bullying territory, wherein the off-record markers are either absent or insufficient to soften the blow. Teasing therefore relies on the frisson generated from its proximity to aggression.

This tension between play and aggression renders teasing a potentially subversive domain of speech and communication that allows it to operate in contrast to the rational knowledge sought after in dialogical discourse. As Foucault demonstrates in "The History of Sexuality, Volume 1" (1978),

discourse's will to knowledge – which is this volume's subtitle in its original French – tends towards surveillance, which includes what we choose to do with our bodies. Of note in his analysis is how power, sexuality, and knowledge have intertwined since the nineteenth century to draw explicit connections between sex and truth, with the latter oscillating between identity and confession, science and medicine. This forces our most intimate experiences of pleasure into certain discursive modes: "[B]etween the objectification of sex in rational discourses, and the movement by which each individual was set to the task of recounting his own sex, there has occurred, since the eighteenth century, a whole series of tensions, conflicts, efforts at adjustment, and attempts at retranscription […]; around sex, a whole network of varying, specific, and coercive transpositions into discourse." (Foucault, 1978, p.35). As such, the turning of sex into discourse refers not so much to the former's repression, but to its insuppressible expansion by the very channels that supposedly regulate its health. In the attempt, then, of power to discipline the scope of knowledge through selective bodily normativity, it simultaneously co-enunciates dissenting sexual desires that depend on the taboo of deligitimisation in order to become properly contagious (ibid., p.48-49). Foucault calls this "perpetual spirals of power and pleasure", explaining:

> The power that lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing; and opposite it, power asserting itself in the pleasure of showing off, scandalizing, or resisting. Capture and seduction, confrontation and mutual reinforcement. (ibid., p.45)

Following Foucault's train of thought that recognises the negotiation and subversion of power in the discourse of sex, the striptease comes to mind, which is the physical performance of seduction, the gradual removal of clothing to reveal the dancer's body as a proxy for sex. The tease, in this sense, relates to the tension between play and aggression that is not as ostensibly straightforward as the relationship of "consumer and object" or "viewer and performer". Speaking in her study on heterosexual striptease dynamics, theatre scholar Katherine Liepe-Levinson observes that "the positions of seeing and being seen in live strip shows (and in erotic-sexual play) are not discrete, nor are they absolutely connected to the respective positions of control and surrender […]. It is possible to theorize, then, that positions of 'desiring,' 'wanting to be desired,' and 'being desired' are likewise interwoven and inseparable for female and male participants in heterosexual contexts" (Liepe-Levinson, 1998, p.33). In other words, the terms of teasing play and aggression are negotiated live, in the relational body borders between the female performer and male spectator of her analysis; in que(e)rying their respective sexual and political frameworks through the malleability of the roles. Their participation, importantly, takes place in accordance to (un)written rules that delineate the tipping point between the two conflicting affects; in the case of the heterosexual striptease, it is the earnest reciprocation of (male) sexual desire in the spectator (a sign teasingly scolds, "Keep Your Dicks In Your Pants" near the stage [ibid., p.28]).

Returning to the spoken, verbal domain, the boundaries are not as legible,

not as clear cut. Indeed, the play-aggression of teasing is a social strategy that navigates relational issues of power, camaraderie, and intimacy. With regards to power, teasing's proximity to bullying was already touched upon in the earlier part of this analysis. For women and queer people, its ultimate embodiment is the "mean girl", a trope often found in teen film and literary genres: smart, arrogant, and villainous, she flatters and humiliates others through teasing to maintain her place at / near the top of a given social hierarchy.

But teasing also has the capacity to gather and evict bodies at a more communal level, which is crucial to counterpublic belonging. Most notably, it is found in "snapping" – or "SNAP!ping", stylised – which is a mode of verbal and performed playfighting specific to the queer African-American context. The SNAP! written convention is used to highlight the finger snapping sound and gesture that usually accompanies the spoken interchange (Riggs, 1991; Johnson, 1995). Its influence in pop culture and the subcultures of the English-speaking world cannot be underestimated; the attitudes and vocabulary adopted wholesale by performers, from pop stars to the mainstream explosion of drag queens, can be traced back to SNAP!ping. As such, the politics of citation that comes with discussing such a heavily co-opted cultural phenomenon must be addressed. There is a wide resonance to SNAP!ping found in the cultural landscape, particularly in shaping a certain self-possessed feminine attitude that is can be readily found in media. With the commonplace use of "digital blackface" in social platforms (Jackson, 2014) as well as more broadly in everyday English language vernacular, the

exploration of SNAP!ping is both an acknowledgement of its continuing resonance and a self-reflexive confrontation of complicity in the misappropriation of African-American culture.

Artist and filmmaker Marlon Riggs, whose work include films, spoken word, performance, and writing, that negotiates the space between race, gender, and sexuality, is an important starting point. Much of his artistic output focuses on the "SNAP! queen" as a persona, which he positions both as narrator and subject. Three of his pieces in different media have been selected for examination: an experimental documentary *Tongues Untied* (1989); a SNAP! lecture-performance at an academic conference (1992); and a personal essay ("Notes of a Signifyin' SNAP! Queen", 1991) to examine how he reclaims the performative antagonism of SNAP! as a queer African-American cultural form.

Early on in *Tongues Untied* (1989), Riggs introduces us to the "Institute of Snap!thology" that features a series of SNAP!ping demonstrations. Ironically serious and ethnographic in tone, Riggs turns the camera lens knowingly back on himself with the use of camp humour; he cinematically SNAP!s back at the earnestness of conventional documentary storytelling without diluting the tender-combative power of SNAP!ping practices (Feil in Charney, 2005, p.485). On screen, for example, we first encounter SNAP!ping via first- and second-hand accounts relayed by talking heads. However, rather than adopt the even, emotional tone of a narrator, they gossip mischievously *with* the viewer. For example, of a lovers' quarrel between two gay African-American

men on a bus, one SNAP! queen narrator exclaims, "The ride is rough! There is no jelly for this!"; of sniding a racist doorman at a club who wanted three forms of ID, another says with a contemptuous flair, "Three pieces of ID?! (SNAP!s three times in the camera's face)" (Riggs, 1989). We then see different shots of African-American men in SNAP! re-enactments and the subcategories of finger-snapping, e.g. "Medusa SNAP!", "Sling SNAP!", "Classic SNAP!", etc. (ibid.) A spoken word piece in the style of an instructional video scores the visual demonstrations:

> This is a basic lesson in SNAP!. Divarettes, listen up to the grand diva rap. SNAP!s can be to love and snaps can be strong. To read, to punctuate, to cut like a whip. […] Precision, pacing, placement, poise, a sophisticated SNAP! is more than just noise. Repeat: precision, poise, placement. You must perfect each for the grand SNAP! statement. (ibid.)

The men are seen in pairs and then in small groups energetically talking into each other's face and encroaching on their opponents' space with faux-threatening SNAP!ping gestures. In both cases, SNAP!ping is used as a way of claiming – in no uncertain terms – one's space and self-possession, which is connected to the way the body's relation to the space around it. This is something I have already explored through queer disorientations (see: 1.1.6. on bodies tending towards other bodies and objects within their reach) and will further investigate with the corporeality of space (see: 3.2.2. on the feeling of bodily intrusion in nationalism).

Scathingly funny while at the same time potentially reparative when used between friends, it is no wonder Riggs claims and reclaims SNAP!ping in his work, making it an integral part of his art practice. Even when asked to speak at a conference on "Black Popular Culture", he turns a SNAP! lens back onto the event. Much in the same manner as his SNAP!ped ethnographic point of view in *Tongues Untied*, he used the opportunity to speak (properly) as an opportunity to SNAP! (inappropriately):

> In the last two years I have become a conference queen. Not with much deliberate intent, mind you. But my video, *Tongues Untied*, in a way I frankly never envisioned while making it, has catapulted me into a society of theory divas and culture queens […] Among you, someone no doubt is thinking: Miss Thing can certainly throw down her verbal drag schtick, but does she comprehend discursive intertextual analysis, can she engage in postfeminist, neo-Marxist, postmodern deconstructionist critique? Does she understand the difference between text, subtext, and metatext? Does she know she's part of a subaltern universe? Can she, in a word, *really* read?
>
> Discomforting questions ricochet in the Snap Queen's mind, and she wonders/ponders further whether his/her tongue is at times, in effect, not her tongue, if her tongue (to gain validation, an audience) has really become their tongues, and if, in fact (yes! to trope sweet Zora), it is their tongues that are in his mouth, pressing against, crowding out

> his own, if he is choking. A different kind of voicelessness. (Riggs, in Wallace and Dent, 1992, p.102-3)

In asking Riggs to present, the conference had the intention of representing a specifically gay, male African-American voice. What he chose to talk about instead, however – what he SNAP!ped about – was the unspoken ground rules and privileges of such a cultural setting: its academic norms, language, and etiquette. Yet at the same time, he chastises himself for allowing "their tongues" to "crowd out his own". As part of his closing statement, he asks, "Do you think you can so closely, critically examine me without studying or revealing yourself?" before he "toss[es] his/her tiara to the next diva in the wings" (ibid., p.105). SNAP!ping, then, confronts one's sense of belonging and resilience by flirting with the boundaries of teasing play and aggression, uncomfortably negotiating the complementary desires to fit in and fight back. That these desires are not only privately processed by the performer but performed through SNAP!ping demonstrates how it is both a self-reflexively and socially negotiated critique.

Besides reclaiming it as an embodied practice, Riggs also brings to bear the oppressive atmosphere that generates SNAP!ping. In his 1991 essay for "Art Journal", he revisits the contempt and rejection he felt for much of his life: "I withdrew into the shadows of my soul; chained my tongue […]; assumed the impassive face and stiff pose of Silent Black Macho" (Riggs, 1991, p.61). Of the many "masks" he had to nurture and hide behind in order to make life bearable, the last straw was when he was implicitly advised to mask the

"blackness" of his voice with a deregionalised one (read: white, midwestern American) used in broadcasting. As an aspiring journalist, "I would have to further shed my vocal color; this was no metaphor. To rise in his ranks, I would have to masquerade in cultural and ideological whiteface" (ibid., p.63). The moment Riggs was able to speak his truth was revelatory; for him, language became the grounds on which cultural and political subjectivities would be properly articulated. He therefore calls for a "coalition" of differences that nonetheless "create[s] a cultural language, a notion of identity":

> Thus far we have chosen, for the most part, an easy multiculturalism, a polite, deferential appreciation and respect for political and cultural pluralism, without developing a rigorous discourse that analyzes how multiple subjectivities intersect, compete, and collide. (Riggs, 1991, p.64)

Yet this coalition's language and identity developments are deferred, as Riggs believes they will be found above all in twenty-first century development of "media arts" (ibid.). Part of this delay is rooted in the hopefulness of 1990s identity politics as group identities were being renegotiated (ibid.) and empowered by their increased visibility. This momentum might explain his optimistic vision of differentiated struggles brought together by a common language and identity.

The potential he foresaw in the arts converges with the art world's interest

with relational, socially engaged, and participatory art, which as he says allow for "multiple subjectivities [to] intersect, compete, and collide". As we have seen in the course of this chapter, the horizontality sought after by dialogue involves muting and bracketing, both of which work against the complexities of embodiment (see: the breakdown of the art projects in 2.2.1.). The assertion, then, is that in order to heed questions of different subjectivities, one must do so by looking at the social practices of different subjectivities, i.e. practices of dissent. The play-aggression of SNAP!ping embodied in Riggs' works is, in this perspective, already the language he was hoping for; it is one amongst many other languages that are marked, unapologetically, by difference. Riggs' SNAP! diva talking heads and his "conference queen" SNAP!-lecture are both instances of self-care and resistance, played out socially in the affective resonance of the audience. It is a kind of performance that falls under camp and hovers between irony and seriousness; it is a tender kind of caricature. As Sontag famously says at the end of her "Notes on Camp" essay, "Camp is generous. It wants to enjoy. It only seems like malice, cynicism. (Or, if it is cynicism, it's not a ruthless but a sweet cynicism.)" (Sontag in Cleto, 1999, p.65). Therefore, instead of a social engagement that prioritises a bringing-together with the purpose of leveling out discrepancies, a focus on differences as frictive points, necessarily unresolved, would alter what forms of communicating we deem productive or not and therefore allow them to be investigated in greater seriousness, *beside* one another. Doing so, it is hoped, would multiply the behavioural possibilities of social relations.

Of course, this particular refraction of dialogue into SNAP!ping is not to suggest that Riggs's work be considered a socially negotiated art practice, nor is it to argue for SNAP!ping as a model for socially negotiated art. Rather, this analysis attests to how the play-aggression of teasing takes shape at specific cultural, affective, and embodied intersections, the nuances of which follow very specific rules. While teasing as a form of mockery is a well-rehearsed strategy used by many artists, e.g. the intentionally nonsensical work of the Dadaists to the over-identifying performances of Andrea Fraser (see: 1.1.6. for Léger's analysis), the point here is to present reparative forms of frictive communication that are socially negotiated in the exclusivity of counterpublic margins. The teasing explored here therefore cannot be compared to the play-aggression of Dadaists that keep them at a remove them from post-war capitalist encroachment, nor can it be to Andrea Fraser's deliberately alienating performances of institutional critique. The terms of teasing in the context of this study concern embodied articulation of borders, the process of which generates *a situated understanding of game play*. In the end, the dissent and friction of play-aggression is at the same time an attunement to the so-called "off-record markers" and critical *proximity* – not *distance*, which looks at how we are already navigating our queer disorientations in daily life (see: 1.1.6. on dislocated subjects) – within a given environment.

This is most relevant for artists who have their own counterpublic affiliations that they want to address, question, or deepen. If a project concerns social groups or contexts close to the artist, and she is already embedded within the specificities of speech and conduct, she is in the robust position to negotiate

the riskier potentials of teasing's play-aggression. Beyond that, artists who are commissioned to take on projects as outsiders (see: 2.2.1. for the nomadic art practices of Ania Bas and Anthony Schrag) would find it harder to do so as their experiences struggle to find their place in relation to local ones. In this case, attunement to teasing would be a complicated matter; instead of drawing from behavioural codes already familiar to the artist, she has to navigate new ones to establish equally new relations. The significance of teasing as play-aggression would then translate into a reading exercise, one that tunes into the resonance between bodies: why and how is it used, what is the outcome? Can she negotiate some kind of place in this performative bonding or must she, as the outsider-artist, step back? As with gossip, teasing functions at the cusp of exclusion and inclusion that does not openly invite membership or impart insider knowledge. A socially negotiated art must be better at critiquing how practices root themselves within situations, with particular attention paid to the ways we make and maintain relations. This includes above all the informal channels of gossip and teasing, which are negotiated exchanges that can prohibit intimacy as much as they encourage it. To use and examine them as means of circulating knowledge and counterpublic exclusivity would be far more enriching than reiterating the need for inclusivity or dialogue.

2.3. Incongruences, plural: towards polyvocality

In this chapter's gradual working towards dissenting discourses, what (if

anything) can still be recuperated from dialogue? As a representation of something more universal, it is not without value. In a new foreword written a decade after "Gender Trouble" was published, Judith Butler revises her previous criticism towards universality, saying that it does have "important strategic use precisely as a non-substantial and open-ended category". This enables it to promote "a future oriented labor of cultural translation" (Butler, 1999, p.xviii). In a similar spirit, this chapter critiques the summoning of dialogue, but only insofar as its disintegration into a myriad of day-to-day speech possibilities would enable a greater frictive understanding towards what is already there: we *do* speak with one another, just not in that perfectly pitched, egalitarian way. The issue, instead, lies in the thoughtful usage and serious examination of these rarely condoned frictive modes – like the aforementioned gossip or teasing – and refusing the insidious descriptors that encircle informal discursive practices.

By reframing dialogue as an *idealised* speech type based on presumptions of equal participation, the potential of *informal* speech types is highlighted in contrast, turning them into sites of knowledge, solidarity, and social negotiations. This is an effort to reconfigure some of the optimistic rhetoric that continues to define art practices in the social realm. What falls between the cracks in thinking about these practices as art or socio-political instrument is the work itself, which involves an embodied criticality of relations and new modes of communication, indigenous as they are to the needs of the projects. To talk about what these practices do as a kind of "dialogue" does little to unearth the complications that mire conversations in situ, while also

presuming an educationally constructive experience. Crucially, the drive for dialogue ignores the how quarrels, and indeed gossip and teasing are already sites for reflection (Moersch, 2011).

In critical psychologist Lisa Blackman's 2001 text on voice-hearing, she questions the "curative process" in psychiatry that equates auditory hallucinations to insanity (Blackman, 2001). Her argument problematises the ways that voice-hearers are encouraged to reject all the voices that do not fall in line with "the voice of reason" (p.203) – a critique that strikes a chord with this study. That unified voice is aligned with the one imagined for dialogue, located as it is within the realms of reason away from the untamed rest. Yet, as we have seen in 2.2., impassioned and candid speech perform activist functions (Young, 2001) of frictive meaning-making. The rationality persistently called for in dialogue is thus complicit with the erasure of alternative, dissenting meanings; as discussed in this chapter, gossip and teasing are two discursive practices examined that generate bonds as well as knowledge in subjugated groups (see: 2.2.1., 2.2.2.). In a similar vein, Blackman sees the pathologisation of voice-hearing and psychiatry's corrective processes of removal as "a problem of government and regulation" (Blackman, 2001, p.152). She argues that

> [t]he socially and historically produced meaning of the voice-hearing experience, embedded within the contemporary 'psy' disciplines, is intimately bound up with the discursive production and maintenance of a very specific image of human life and morality. (ibid., p. 187)

The assertion here is that, as with activist, dissenting discursive practices, the multiple voices are seen as "a random, uninvited and uncontrollable assault […] on a person's psychological functioning" (ibid.). This convergence makes it is possible to draw a direct connection between the psychiatric, institutional mandate to have a unified voice with the educational mandate to dialogue in the same even-tempered voice: both prioritise reason, thus stabilising governance. This is predicated on what Blackman calls a "pre-discursive" ability to "self-regulate and operate with a sense of responsibility and guilt" (ibid.), echoing the refrain of the naturally rational human being.

By drawing attention to voice-hearing, the intention is to underscore how polyvocality is capable of producing ongoing agonistic commentaries. And as such, the conflicting cacophony of voices behaves much like the disagreeing perspectives that bump and collide in the messy relational material of an art project: without exploring the friction of discursive practices, there would be no relationships to speak of between artists, participants, commissioners, collaborators, etc. Dialogue, sought after for its ostensible neutrality and horizontality, is desired for the unity it implies when, in fact, it takes away the possibility of situation-specific speech. Techniques mentioned in Blackman's study to treat voice-hearers include "distraction, denial, negation, and diversion" (Blackman, 2001, p.187), all of which seek to shut down rather than acknowledge the voices. As such, Blackman's approach towards voice-hearing veers towards a reparative polyvocality, one in which the meaning of selfhood is multiple, shifting, negotiated. This also directly impacts the

(irresolvable) struggle for congruence between consciousness and embodiment – which, as we understand through gender performativity (Butler, 1990; see: 1.1.1.), are mutually co-constitutive. Indeed, voice-hearing is not always pathologised, as "the 'psy' disciplines" distinguish between "pseudo" (random or situation-specific) and "real" (completely consuming) auditory hallucinations. While the voices and visions may vary wildly, it is ultimately an issue of control that determines pathologisation:

> Control is taken to be a measure of social and work functioning, where the focus is upon specifying how well a person is seen to be functioning within the external milieu. […] Control is therefore not measured in relation to vividness, but with a person's relation to the eternal world. It is a measure of behaviour and conduct, and not a measure of the quality of a person's own internal reverie. (Blackman, 2001, p.23)

In this light, the voices are seen as a sign of bodily as well as mental disintegration (ibid., pp.198-199). Translated to the larger social realm, discursive practices of dissent are then similarly pathologised as disintegration. For Blackman, working *with* voices entails their (re-)integration into a person's life not so much by individual therapy but by group dynamics. In other words, the voices would need to be socially negotiated:

> [T]he experience of hearing voices can even become a marker of sensitivity, or even oppression. It is not just about changing 'beliefs',

> but radically transforming the ways in which voices are problematised and acted upon, often occurring within a particular dynamic of group processes. (ibid., p.202)

The use of the frictive in this chapter is to highlight dissenting voices not in oppositional contrast to dialogue, but in a productive refraction that brings other spoken discursive practices to bear. Polyvocality is embodied and situated in the many; it is therefore always performed in relation with others. Returning to Butler, she reminds us in "Excitable Speech" (1997) that while speech can be "a force that both presages and inaugurates a subsequent force" (Butler, 1997, p.9) by saying what is about to happen, it fails to acknowledge speaking itself as a performative act of the body. Utterance is meaning finding its way out through physicality, which often ends up as a surprise; we do or say what was never intended in the first place.

In a way, the uncoupling of speaking from consciousness turns it into an act over which a subject does not have full control, which reiterates some of the important subjective dispositions looked into in chapter one: dispossession (see: 1.1.3.), which stresses a social orientation of the self that allows a "you" to emerge from the body as well as its surroundings; and material-discursivity (see: 1.1.4.), which posits a performative agency of matter and doing. Different voices and speech types therefore *occur* as much as they *are*, relying on bodily performance as much as intention. As such, it is embodied criticality that we return to time and again in this research; by insisting that dialogue, and social negotiation for that matter, be more than the brutal

equalising between subjective positions, this study seeks to carefully nurture a frictive approach that accounts for situated elements – bodies, stimuli, affect, social powers, etc. – at play. By refracting dialogue's pedagogically constructive obligations and the horizontality that it strives for, this chapter argues that dissenting multiplicity and intimate forms of frictive communication both need to be centred in critically embodied, situated practices of a socially *negotiated* art. Following Ahmed (2006), an abundance of other possibilities – of other "worlds" – can emerge if we can queerly disorient ourselves from the dialogical horizon and attend to the intimacy of speech.

3. The difficulties of love: political attachments and the felt dimensions of socially negotiated art

The previous chapter ended on an analysis of frictive communication that refracts the pedagogical call for dialogue. Speech practices affectively makes the social as they are remade by it, strengthening and breaking connections within the relational material. Indeed, this chapter turns to the way these connections feel, and to the affective dimensions that motivate art workers to work outside of gallery contexts. For many of us, the desire often feels like a faraway promise that has a gravitational pull, that can link bodies together if only we tried harder. But does this desire result, in fact, from feelings and workings related to love? If not, then how do we describe and analyse the connections some art workers hope to generate (and ideally sustain) as part of a socially and politically charged art process? What can actually be said about the affective conditions that foster, limit, and prescribe these encounters?

The significance of love stems from the methodological interest in being "beside" (Sedgwick, 2003) as well as from a need for a better articulation of the "felt" dimension in socially negotiated art practices. In conceiving the multiplicity of encounters and experiences through a multilateral embodiment of "rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing" (ibid., p.8; see: 1.2), one inevitably turns to how these actions *feel*. As this study questions social engagement and shifts the emphasis onto social negotiation as part of an

artistic process, the affective intentions we as art workers and researchers bring into projects must also be examined. Specifically, its proximity to love and its affiliates need to be better critiqued as this strand of art so often intersects with care and activism. To do so, this chapter limits its investigation to the desires, affects, and experiences most closely associated with these art practices. It does not venture into psychoanalytic territory by delving into latent or unconscious motivations; nor does it seek to propose or refine any typology of love.

Yet it is useful to look briefly at the classical Greek delineation of *philia*, which provides a useful affective premise to the loving feelings that this chapter explores. Of the different and overlapping kinds of love noted in ancient Greek, *philia* is the one most concerned with the possibility of acting for others on the basis of affection. Classics scholar David Konstan notes that the heart of this lies in the tension between reciprocity and altruism, whereby the former hinges on duty and the latter on affection, generosity. In his attempt to collapse the obligation and the desire to do something for others, he argues that "in classical antiquity, love was deemed to play a larger role in the way people accounted for motivation in a number of domains, including friendship, loyalty, gratitude, grief, and civic harmony" (ibid., p.31). This chapter similarly brings together needs and desires to reiterate the good intentions and loving feelings that make up the affective textures of so many socially negotiated art practices. But it also attends to more chaotic feelings that fall outside of *philia*, closer to what Audre Lorde calls "the erotic", or "our deepest feelings" that help us "give up, of necessity, being satisfied with

suffering and self-negation, and with the numbness which so often seems like their only alternative in our society" (Lorde, 1984, p.58).

The idea is to critique these loving textures through theoretical reflection (2.1.), scenes (2.2.), and labour (2.3.), so as to: 1. take seriously the bonding power that brings bodies together in an overarching concept that is referred to here as love; and 2. give an analysis of its different aspects in three parts that puts it into theoretical and political perspectives. Together, they provide an embodied reading of the complex, often contradictory, incongruent feelings and motivations (or lack thereof) that spur the processes of socially negotiated art. The first section of this chapter begins with three theoretical perspectives that concern love specifically, starting again with Paulo Freire's reflections that weave in and out of personal narrative and pedagogy (3.1.1.). This is followed by a comparative reading of love's politicality in Michael Hardt and Lauren Berlant respectively (3.1.2.). Then, in light of this study's interest in embodiment, the second section of this chapter examines scenes of social love, which interrogate how bodies magnetise towards one another affectively and politically: firstly, as temporary assemblies of protest congregating in the streets (3.2.1.); and secondly, as defensive, nationalist selves to keep foreign others at bay (3.2.2.). To end, the third and final section of this chapter focuses on care as an embodied demonstration of love, specifically in affective labour (3.3.1). Silvia Federici's description of the "extradomestic" is both borrowed and extended as a critical approach, which is used to look into care within three different frameworks of socially negotiated art (3.3.2.). The three parts of this chapter ultimately investigate possible facets love without

regarding it as a whole.

3.1. Three theoretical perspectives on love

Reading Freire was an important emotional step in coming to terms with this study's concern of the relational material in socially negotiated art practices. Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" was one of the first books that helped incite different, firmly political questions of intersubjectivity, given its fiery proclamation to be accountable to one another. The conviction with which he advocated for dialogue within radical education resonated with me at a time of professional fatigue. With this book as a starting point, dialogue and love have become two key loci from which a socially *negotiated* art might be reconceived. However, the most significant outcome was how this endeavour has turned into an examination of egalitarian presumptions that underlie dialogue, love, and praxis in the Freirean sense. Yet the fact remains that his work has enriched the grounds of this study, opening it up to queer and feminist approaches that are attuned to the affective and material textures of embodiment.

This chapter begins by reconnecting with Freire's writing, with his thoughts on love, loss, and faith that had moved the research direction in the first place. His later reflections in "Pedagogy of the Heart" (1997) and "Pedagogy of Hope" (2004) form the basis of the examination. Using his anecdotes as a starting point, this analysis turns to love and hope in his work while critiquing

them in context of his life and work. The following subsection (2.1.2.) then attempts to unsettle those love and love-like feelings through the differing conceptual lenses of Michael Hardt and Lauren Berlant: while Hardt counterproposes a love for the stranger – i.e. for the other (Hardt, 2011a) – to the biblical imperative to "love thy neighbour", Berlant prefers to tackle the moral ambivalence of attachment that is in itself what is unsettling. I use their (Berlant's) description of "intimate publics" (Berlant, 2011) to explore the movement as well as the impasses of affect and argue how these moments of co-feeling are part of understanding complicity through dispossession.

3.1.1. Paulo Freire's mobilisation of love and hope

The importance of love is peppered throughout Freire's writing. It underpins his pedagogy and influences the way in which he envisions the emancipatory project as a whole. Yet despite repeatedly referring to love, there is no dedicated investigation on the topic; instead, he recounts anecdotes in order to support his claims. For instance, while he insists that we collectively risk "acts of love" as part of an emancipatory praxis (Freire, 1970, p.50), he does not offer an argument to clarify what he means by such a politicised love, only that it is "the very nature of human beings" to love (Freire, 1997, p.44). As his pedagogy's key affective concept, it nonetheless requires considerable interpretive labour on the reader's part. But as with his understanding of "human" or "humanisation", there are broad presumptions in his use of love that are not supported theoretically; what it means is explained in terms of

practice, a "vocation" of becoming that is equated to making change in the world. We can deduce from his writing as a whole that "humanisation" is reactively opposed to the "dehumanisation" that he witnessed in the rural regions of Brazil and Chile early in his life. Away from the critical philosophical developments with regards to human nature in the twentieth century, he stresses instead the primacy of the body in his pedagogy. In a similar fashion, his understanding of love is based on its affective generosity that is not so much rooted in a focused theoretical engagement than it is on his own embodied experiences, which is not a dissimilar position to that of the research here. However, his take on love is more a source for hope and mobilisation than it is a problem of its own.

In her analysis of Freire's work, education scholar Antonia Darder acknowledges how love is an ethical dimension underscoring education as political practice, since "we must dare to do all things with feeling, dreams, wishes, fear, doubts, and passion" (Darder, 2017, p.49). Freire's liberatory education is "*a labor born of love*, but deeply anchored in an unceasing commitment to know through both theory and practice" (ibid., p.55, my emphasis). Her argument is in line with situating love as a motivational force in Freire's pedagogy, enabling the work he envisions. In his own words:

> [Pedagogy of Hope] is written *in rage and love, without which there is no hope*. It is meant as a defense of tolerance—not to be confused with connivance—and radicalness. (Freire, 2004, p.4)

In "Pedagogy of Hope", emotional forces take centre stage – a "fabric", he calls it, that contains "the cultural marks, memories, feelings, and sentiments, doubts, dreams […] and longings, of my world, my sky" (ibid.). They unfold through autobiographical narratives, which he provides in lieu of theoretical analysis. While this has drawn criticism from education scholars, there are nonetheless those who defend the poetic, first-person tendencies that pervade so much of his writing. Antonia Darder argues that "his revolutionary hope was firmly grounded upon the materiality of the body" (Darder, 2017, p.78); indeed, she calls his pedagogy "a humanizing ethos *of the body*" that "support[s] reflection, dialogue and solidarity" (ibid., p.82, my emphasis). The primacy of the body is something that resonates with this study, to a degree. For instance, his recourse to autobiography can be seen as an embodied interpretation of "reflection" as he takes his body as a starting point. As such, hope, rage, and love can only ever be examined as lived. However, the intention here is to be more specific about how and where these feelings work within his pedagogy beyond as well as beside the affective implications of his anecdotes. This includes both an interrogation of his first-person narratives as well as some contextualisation that resituates his perspective in theory and in practice.

We can begin with his childhood, which is a time and place that he repeatedly goes to for reflection even as a man. In great detail, he depicts a backyard with its "mango trees, cashew trees with branches kneeling down to the shaded ground" and the "varied colors, smells, and fruits" (Freire, 1997, p.38). Recalling these things while exiled in Geneva, he is struck by how such

textures affectively produce him:

> I was realized as the *I* who made things, the thinking *I* and the speaking *I*. […] In that afternoon, it was as if I had discovered that the longing I was feeling for my homeland, had begun to be prepared by the *lived relationship* I had with my backyard. (ibid., original emphases)

As Freire says here, the "I" is explicitly a maker, thinker, and speaker, but the possibility of reflection hinges on his having felt something on "the lived relationship". The felt dimension, as crucial as it is for Freire's thinking, appears as correlative, directly reflective. This lineage between making, thinking, and feeling carries with it some presumptions of what an excavation of textures is supposed to bring about: they generate facts about one's feelings, which can be used to correct the feeling (of sentimental longing, for instance) wilfully, where necessary. The congruence accorded to this process of excavation not only depletes a disruptive element of surprise that is a crucial and irresolvable part of life, but also enforces a rationalisation of feelings that produce capably revolutionary emotions like rage and love. At the same time, we "carry with us the memory of many fabrics, a self soaked in our history" (Freire, 2004, p.23). Is Freire therefore saying that we need to forgo the many emotional valences in order to feed a raging, loving hope for collective worldmaking? It is in the least suggested, since certain feelings like nostalgia (which "nullifies tomorrow", ibid., p.45) and fear apparently contribute towards a hopeless, "immobilist fatalism".

In this light, retrieving textures of our past is always already aligned with mobilisation, which we see in the way Freire writes about his life. Concentrating on details that demonstrate the impact of his personal history on his present day political determination, he fastidiously analyses how certain events have made their mark on him. He recounts, for instance, how emotionally debilitated he would feel whenever it rained heavily. Many years later, on a visit home, he seems to come upon a realisation:

> I stopped in front of the house in which I had lived—the house in which my father died in the late afternoon of October 21, 1934. […] That rainy afternoon, with the sky dark as lead over the bright green land, the ground soaked, I discovered the fabric of my depression. I became conscious of various relationships between the signs and the central core, the deeper core, hidden within me. I unveiled the problem, by clearly and lucidly grasping its "why." I dug up the archeology of my pain. (Freire, 2004, p.22)

His "fabrics" do not stay as such; sticking to his analogy, they are meant to be unraveled into its singular, legible threads. Each one explains a "why" of his sadness, which solders a narrative onto an emotion. The underlying assumption is that "problem" (rain) and "emotion" (sadness) are interlinked, as if situations are incapable of triggering more incongruous and multiple connections that defy direct, one-to-one correlations. It is argued here that his "archaeology" uses storytelling to straighten out the queerest of our

feelings, to package cumbersome fabrics into more manageable explainers. Freire describes how his intuitions give rise to new pieces of information over time, as "tapestries and fabrics [become] meaning". Thus,

> to connect recollections, recognize facts, deeds, and gestures, to fuse pieces of knowledge, solder moments, *re*-cognize in order *to cognize*, to know, better. (ibid., p.11, original emphasis)

This approach assumes an obvious connection to be made between an event and a feeling, which does not always work themselves out with such clarity. Memories and their readings are never reliable, much less the affective intensities that surround them (see: 1.1.6. on embodying disorientations). Given Freire's activist legacy that is deeply connected to the reading and writing of the word/world, it is little wonder that he would strive for the legible clarity of cognition (echoed in the above "*to cognize*, to know, better"). As fellow critical pedagogue Henry Giroux notes, Freire believed in "the crucial necessity of not only reading the world critically but also intervening in the larger social order as part of the responsibility of an informed citizenry" (Giroux in Lake and Kress, 2013, p.xii). The affective textures then break down into legible threads, wherein the "deeper core" (ibid., p.22) of each person lies. The argument is that, for Freire, stories are sources of "rage and love" that need to be unlearned from inconvenient feelings, ones that are bad for, as Giroux puts it, "informed citizenry". Thus, rage and love are a Freirean conscientisation *at an emotional level*, making us aware of the feelings that best correlate with worldmaking. This means that

we must properly *read* our feelings – not merely sense them – and rewrite them into stories that we tell ourselves in our collective political struggle. As such, love fuels hope, and in turn, transformation. The more we excavate, the more emotional power we can reap for change.

At this point, it is useful to theoretically underpin Freire's hope. Throughout his work, it is positioned as an ontological need, which finds earlier resonance in Ernst Bloch's famous and complex analysis of hope. Bloch similarly frames hope as a necessary part of life. But whereas Freire emphasises a subjective mediation of affect that ensures hope, Bloch sees it in the making of utopian desires that point towards a more promising future. Hopes for "a better life" can be located in longings not obviously aligned with a radical rage or love, but obliquely so with "cultural artifacts" through which we daydream (e.g. fairytales, art, and even advertising) (Bloch, 1986). Bloch's "preconscious" does not require raising, nor does it hoard the forgotten, but instead embodies a "Not-Yet-Conscious" and a "dawning". He differentiates this notion of the preconscious from that of Freud's: his contains "no repressed material, but rather something coming up, is to be clarified" (ibid., p.116). Far from the nightmarish unveiling of past trauma is this notion of a dreaming-ahead, whereby utopia can be sensed with an "anticipatory consciousness" (ibid., p.157). He therefore advocates for a kind of analysis that attunes to the latent affective currency of cultural artifacts ranging from art and opera to advertising and fairytales. These are utopian "daydreams" that emerge from capitalist constraints of life, with varying degrees of emancipatory potential. Freire's hope is less about imagining the contours of a Blochian concrete

utopia as it is to about ensuring that the past – what Bloch calls a "No-Longer-Conscious" – is not left irreconciled. To be clear, Bloch also pays attention to the culturally-generated potential that lingers historically in the "undischargedness" of the No-Longer-Conscious (ibid., p.141). But what is notable in Freire is how the past is restored through thoughtful consideration: by looking at how his emotions that have hampered him, they are reinscribed with the hope he feels is necessary to keep moving.

Arguably then, hope in the Freirean sense is the harnessing of affective intensities into emotional stability – rage and love – from which one feeds to get things done. Thus construed, it is indeed an "ontological need" that can be positioned alongside his Catholic faith. Although he is hesitant to mention it in his work, faith is a significant contributor to his activist understanding of hope, rage, and love. In fact, education scholar William M. Reynolds notes that Freire was "instrumental in creating […] the zeitgeist of the 1960s and 1970s in Latin America. Part of that zeitgeist was that portions of the Latin American Catholic Church's clergy developed liberation theology" (Reynolds in Lake and Kress, 2013, p.136). On faith, Freire accords it

> fundamental importance […] in my struggle for overcoming an oppressive reality and for building a less ugly society, one that is less evil and more humane. [B]eing in faith means moving, engaging in different forms of action coherent with that faith. (Freire, 1997, p.104)

Yet, he admits that he refrains himself from speaking about his faith out of

discomfort, "[a]t least, I do not feel as comfortable as I do when speaking about my political choice, my utopia, and my pedagogical dreams" (ibid., p.104). This partly reveals how his writing on hope as a bodily, affective experience is coded by his faith; the struggle against oppression can only take place with hope, the latter of which we nourish with love. Similarly, Reynolds argues that "the struggle filled with hope [is] the lasting legacy in Freire's work with liberation theology" (Reynolds in Lake and Kress, 2013, p.141). Where the two overlap most tellingly is what liberation theologists calls "a 'preferential option for the poor'" (ibid., p.131) and their "stressing the importance of the sins of the system over the importance of individual sin" (ibid.). As such, Reynolds contends that Freire's critical pedagogy is "consistent with [such a] Marxian and Christian utopianism", which is characterised by its "hope with deep commitment". In Freire's mind, this is pitted against "hopelessness and despair, both the consequence and the cause of inaction and immobilism" (ibid., p.141).

Hope and faith play key roles in his work, because he is dedicated to the possibility of emancipation; his is a pedagogy spurred by rage and love. Indeed, his closest readers – Henry Giroux and bell hooks, for instance – always insist that his writing not be discussed in isolation from its affective context. But they do so in different ways: where Giroux focuses on situating Freire's work within a postcolonial struggle, hooks finds personal resonance in his "recognition of the subject position of those most disenfranchised" (hooks, 1994, p.53). Here, the aim is to better reconnect Freire's hope, rage, and love within his life and work, which is also to take seriously both the embodied

understanding that pervades his writing and the notion of praxis to mean action and practice as well as reflection and theory. Education scholar and close colleague Peter McLaren states that Freire's work must be understood as part of a "postcolonial praxis"; his pedagogy is specifically geared towards "decentering and disorienting forms of authority that domesticate the Other […]. His goal has been to question the tacit assumptions – the unexamined faith in continuity and desire for familiarity – that make up the history of the oppressed" (McLaren, 1992, pp.23-24). This postcoloniality is stressed in Giroux's repositioning of Freire's work as "a dislocating discourse" that makes visible "how Western knowledge is encased in historical and institutional structures that both privilege and exclude particular readings, particular voices, certain aesthetics, forms of authority, specific representations, and modes of sociality" (Giroux, 1992, p.23).

While he is critical of Freire's binary oppositions most evident in his earlier work, Giroux also reminds us of the conditions in which Freire's politically and culturally minded pedagogy was first conceived. As such, "there is a […] profound sense of *rupture, transgression, and hope*, intellectually and politically, in his work" (ibid., p.21, my emphasis) that makes it as problematic as it is envigorating. What Giroux's analysis foregrounds is how Freire's writing is born of "the heat of life-and-death struggle" of anti-imperialism (ibid., p.19) that called for a more daring interweaving between cultures, disciplines, and languages. In other words, the "restlessness" of his work is *part of* an intense, affective swell. Even as his work continues to draw different analyses and criticisms, it is above all the emotional force and

urgency with which he writes that resonates with many of his readers. Returning to hooks's short reflection of his influence on her, she talks about how his writing gave her the means to resist the racist culture of the United States; to come to terms with herself as a subject; and to recognise disenfranchisement. She admits that she experiences difficulty with addressing the sexism of his work because of everything else that it enables, especially in "Pedagogy of the Oppressed": "I felt myself included […] in a way that I never felt myself—in my experience as a rural black person—included" (hooks, 1994, p.51). Her reflections focuses above all on how his work *moves* her, particularly in the generosity it evokes and his honest display of non-defensive vulnerability (ibid., pp.54-55).

Thus, loving affects seep into Freire's own pedagogical theorisation as well as into the worlds of those who read him. His understanding of love seems at first glance somewhat static, a source of strength and hope, and feeding a mobilising impulse for change. As this chapter unfolds, the certainty of love at the subjective level is disturbed, resembling instead an endless struggle for closure. This is arguably what a Freirean notion of hopeful love also feels like: it is always incomplete. From this perspective, a more fruitful way of tracking down what he means by love is to look more obliquely, more queerly at his work. In his argument for "becoming unsettled", for instance, one comes close to the mobilisation that he so desires. Against the resignation that is so often found in the religious belief of the disenfranchised groups he worked with, Freire advocates "becoming unsettled", which aligns with "a God on the side of those with whom justice, truth, and love should be" (Freire, 1997,

p.103). In the process of unsettling, he argues, submission can be counteracted with momentum for change. But moreover, within the context of this study, it holds out the possibility for examining disconcerting feelings that exist beside the certainty of hope, love, or rage; that wrestle with the fabrics of life in other ways.

3.1.2. Loving the stranger and intimate publics

As the love-core is dispersed, so too is the preoccupation for identifying the precise forces that drive political work. In attempting to feel out the contours of the possible motivations in socially negotiated art, love evokes a similar aspiration to that of dialogue in the previous chapter: of an improbable equality and magnamity, though this time around, we are entering the mercurial, erratic realm of affective intensities. In emphasising the changeability of what we feel and the subjective experiences of how we feel what we feel, this chapter tunes into the modulations – pluralised – of what is meant by "love". If it is to be better understood, articulated, or referenced in discourse, we must face up to its broad and disconcerting universality. Two differing views that tap into the variegated capacities of love while staying in conversation with one another are those of Hardt and Berlant. In the last decade, they have talked in person as well as through essays about the political, gravitational potentials of love. Using their conversations as comparative entry points into a love exploration, we find different ways of capturing and dislodging its effusiveness: this is a characteristic that is the

most intellectually confusing, worrying, and captivating with regards to love. The intention here is to understand the desirous, magnetising draw by turning first of all to these conceptual approaches as a navigational guide. The remainder of the chapter follows through that strong affective compulsion, maintaining the "effusive" stamina right alongside the making of new theoretical insights and, of course, an embodied criticality (see: 1.1.).

Hardt's shorter, more recent texts on love lay out a tentative plan of identifying and politicising it. But an earlier attempt can be found in his co-authored book with Antonio Negri "Commonwealth" (2009), which seeks to "redefin[e] love in such a way as to demonstrate its *utility*" (Negri and Hardt, 2009, p.179, my emphasis). Distinctive to the way they approach love is the allusion to opposing poles that are evident as follows: belonging to the common of singularities on one end of the spectrum and to mystical unifications of romance or race on the other; a love that produces new subjectivities versus a love that propagates and conforms to preconceived interests. The comparatives offer ways of contrasting different kinds of love that somehow defy categorical fixities, since "it can be and is constantly being transformed" (ibid., 190). In fact, Hardt and Negri are setting up the reader to judge love in terms of its ability to construct the common. But not only does this encourage a reductive reading of love as a "utilitarian" means to an end, it also proposes a morally evaluative matrix:

> The first question to ask when confronting evil, then, is, *What specific love went bad here? What instance of the common has been*

corrupted? (ibid., p.190, original emphasis)

As Lauren Berlant (2011) similarly points out, it ends up being a matter of separating bad from good love which cannot take into account those moments in which you *wrongly* assess the motive of your (or someone else's) love. In fact, a prominent aspect of love is precisely that it cannot be morally depended upon; Hardt and Negri acknowledge as much when they say that it is "deeply ambivalent and susceptible to corruption" (Hardt and Negri, 2009, p.182). This is explored in the latter part of this section (2.1.2.) by way of Berlant's intimate publics and cruel optimism. For now, the task lies in examining the selectivity in what Hardt later calls a "political" love.

Returning to "Commonwealth", the co-authors refute the mandate to "love thy neighbour" – which is often "corrupted" to mean "love those who are the same as you" – and instead, to suggest the opposite, to "love the stranger" and their difference and otherness (ibid., p.183). Hardt also elaborates on the theme of unification and difference in his later thoughts on love (2011a, 2011b, 2012). The perils of homogeneity are found in our most intimate needs that differently translate into e.g. the completion of oneself by another person, or in the preservation of a sovereign, nationalist state that is uncontaminated by others. In other words, both kinds of love are motivated by the idea of sameness; love is wielded here for the purpose of unification. To substantiate his later argument, he notes that Arendt disqualifies love from the political arena due to its "fundamental and ineluctable effect as unification" (Hardt, 2011b, p.678). Unwilling to give up entirely on love, Hardt

proposes a different paradigm that is built upon a communism that, citing Marx, conceives of love relations that opposes property relations and finally "become[s] human" when it can function as a fully-fledged social organ in communist emancipation (ibid., p.680):

> Communism can thus be conceived as the creation of a new love, which operates […] by increasing our power to create and maintain relations with each other and the world. Under the rule of property, in which property structures and maintains social order and bonds, Marx claims that the power of the love and the other senses cannot be developed. And correspondingly to achieve a society beyond the rule of property those human powers would have to be transformed and expanded. (ibid., p.681)

Love would then inaugurate a new era of the senses that befits an equally new political era. To clarify what Hardt is proposing: love, whose unpredictable volatility he acknowledges, can in fact be defined and assigned functions ("to demonstrate its utility", as quoted earlier). This excludes ways of loving as inappropriate, such as the love of (becoming) the same, which is a sentiment that structures the most extreme, self-preserving political movements. For Hardt, then, these groups ought to be disqualified altogether from the discussion of politics (ibid., p.678). Loving thy neighbour cannot be political whereas loving thy stranger and difference is a political act.

But the knowledge to love thy stranger does not necessarily correlate with

achieving that in practice. It cannot be simply assumed that a conceptual understanding of a "wrong" love will steer it back to the "right" one, for how often do we hear about "toxic" situations that people find impossible to get out of? In this examination of how to love politically – or correctly, in accordance to Hardt's "wrong" to "right" spectrum – the process appears to function top-down, from head to body, mind to matter: declare your ambitions before you go forth and love uncorrupted. The naming or taming of love does not adequately tackle the affective effusiveness that is capable of generating momentum *across* his categories of neighbours and strangers. The listing of criteria, of describing love's orientation or how it ought to behave, is a deadening move that neglects how feelings of love behave amorally. This is partly articulated in "A Properly Political Concept of Love" (2011), in which Berlant responds to Hardt. Critiquing Hardt's framework of love, they wonder (Berlant's pronouns are they / them) whether there can be "other kinds of infrastructure for proximity" that does not promote "spending and hoarding. [Love] could be released into the world when no longer copying property, so that we, through our senses, would belong to the world, rather than it belonging to us" (Berlant, 2011b, p.684). In likening Hardt's love typology to property, they broach the larger question of ownership and (the possibility of) reining in love until it is the right kind: the kind that is not dissimilar to Freire's hopeful love and works for the greater political good. Beyond that, Berlant also argues against the enforcing of rules:

> Any social theory worthy of its ambition requires a space for enigmatic, chaotic, incoherent, and structurally contradictory attachments; it

> needs a way to assess the attachment needs that put people in relation without promising to deliver "a life" that feels cushioned. There is no cure for ambivalence. (ibid., p.685)

Instead of providing a clear alternative of a love that could work – or even perform politically and enable something more than basic survival – Berlant turns instead to attachments that lead us to certain objects in expense of others that are oriented the right way politically. They examine this amoral impulse further in "Cruel Optimism" (2011), which questions "how people maintain their binding to modes of life that threaten their well-being" (Berlant, 2011a, p.16). To be clear, the focus of their text is not at all on the specific intensities of a love-situation, but rather on whatever affective forces that draw and bring us "in proximity with" an "object/scene of desire", the latter of which is at the same time "an obstacle to fulfilling the very wants that bring people to it" (ibid., p.227). In fact, Hardt's love for alterity might be cast as a case of cruel optimism; he wants rid of the sentimentality that props up an imagined unity just to have it re-emerge as a sentimentality of embraced difference. Unlike Hardt, Berlant does not locate any specific emotion or space in which political optimism is found. Rather, their approach negotiates the fraught attempts of flourishing and the attachments we form in the simultaneous navigation of life and political potential. This puts aside questions of *moral* allegiances and examines instead love's *multiple* allegiances (whether correct, corrupt, or something beside these) by turning them into forces of longing.

Turning to the peculiarities of optimism, Berlant contends that it may likely resemble "dread, anxiety, hunger, curiosity" (ibid., p.2) seeing how anticipation seldom feels like joy alone (if at all). These "binding modes of life" are enabled by what they frame as "clusters of promises" (ibid.) that captivate. While there are innumerable reasons that see us returning time and again to these promises, the overriding one is the desire for something better. They position this as a form of political hope, as motivations and interest for the larger lived context. In a documented live conversation with Hardt, Berlant describes the social as "the problem of the inconvenience of other humans" (Berlant in Davis and Sarlin, 2011), which encapsulates what it might *feel like* to live alongside others, alongside strangers as well as neighbours. When the political is construed as a frictive field, where are the possibilities and how do we assure ourselves? From this, then, Berlant extracts an "intimate public" that produces "immediacy and solidarity by establishing in the public sphere an affective register of belonging" (Berlant, 2011a, p.225). Specific to these publics is an attunement to each other's struggles (which puts them in contact with Warner's counterpublics in the context of this study). Notably in Berlant, however, is the emphatic reiteration of the amorality of affect, which then leaves the political consequences of its forces to speculation. In "The Female Complaint" (2008), they talk about these intimate publics as "a world of strangers who would be emotionally literate in each other's experience of power, intimacy, desire and discontent" (Berlant, 2008, p.4). Loosely and conditionally tied together, they work via various forms of narration (also noted in Warner's argument on counterpublics as circulation of texts, see: 1.1.3.) that "*feel* as though it

expresses what is common" (Berlant, 2008, p.4) and offer "[a] sense of capacious emotional continuity" (ibid., p.5). Although they originally use this formulation to talk about the emergence of women's culture in the United States, the focus on affective resonance as the parameters of membership makes it possible to imagine a vague but importantly real sense of belonging without having to depend on physical presence. In other words, you are part of it as soon as it moves you. Improbably expensive clothes and reductive advice columns found in women's magazines are stories to remind you of a social belonging. "This means that people participate in it who may share nothing of the particular worlds being represented in a given magazine, book, film, or soap opera venue" (ibid., p.ix). Indeed, Berlant reminds us that strangers – which can include Hardt's sense of difference and otherness – are able to generate solidarity from making-believe:

> A public is intimate when it foregrounds affective and emotional attachments located in fantasies of the common, the everyday, and a sense of ordinariness, a space where challenging and banal conditions of life take place in proximity to the attentions of power but also squarely in the radar of a recognition that can be provided by other humans. (ibid., p.8)

The net is therefore cast somewhat differently from Warner's counterpublics. Rather than seeking a social form by inclining towards a narration however faint, an intimate public is formed of affective attachments that make day-to-day survival possible. This allows for a hugely expanded perspective on what

constitutes a public, especially if it coincides with socially negotiated art practices in foregrounding the aesthetic and political relevance of feelings. Indeed, politics appears most of all as indirect communication, in the clipped headings of news feeds and overheard in the street, which recalls the spreading spatiality of gossip explored earlier (see: 2.2.2.). Berlant reminds us that

> [a]midst all of the chaos, crisis, and injustice in front of us, the desire for alternative filters that produce the sense – if not the scene – of a more livable and intimate sociality is another name for the desire for the political. (ibid.)

This reframes sentimentality and political indifference *as* politically motivated, precisely because they are related to the desire for "a more livable and intimate sociality". In fact, the two – livability and intimacy – permeate our every experience in the most uneven of ways, making Hardt's hope of a well-defined and correct political love impossible to guarantee. Rather than dictate a properly political love that works towards a new communist sensorium further afield, how might we draw out what is *already* here? What of the (fantastic) relations that we practice everyday to make life livable right now? A "political love", if there is one, must heed where we all are as sentient bodies, what we already feel, and with whom or with what we are complicit. These indicate how we strive in the direction of survival and flourishing.

While closing in on these desires at work, Berlant introduces the notion of

being-stuck that acts as a counterweight to the effusiveness of being-moved towards an attachment. For them, this constitutes an "impasse", which is the moments in which crisis is lived through quite ordinarily, not merely defined by the high intensity of milestones or disasters (Berlant, 2011a, p.10). A few times, they supplement what this means with the image of staying mobile and afloat in water, which reinforces the sense of desperation and suspense in surviving. They note:

> The impasse is a space of time lived without a narrative genre. Adaptation to it usually involves a gesture or undramatic action that points to and revises an unresolved situation. (ibid., p.199)

Using two films by Laurent Cantet to examine the sense of being caught adrift in the present as impasse, Berlant contends that there is a precarity beyond the economic; it is one that has seeped deep into the affective structure of the global precariat, or the "planetary petty bourgeoisie" (Berlant, 2011a, p.191-192), a description she borrows from Agamben. They zoom into specific scenes and bodily gestures of the two films that hearken to compulsive behaviours of holding on, to locate precisely where these affective impressions make their mark: the "hazing [between management and production] as the price of upward mobility" (ibid., p.206); the momentary "bodily paralysis" and "stunned ineloquence" of feeling the slipping away of stability and retirement (ibid., p.211); and "the open secret of the zombie managerial enthusiasm" that one must uphold in order to keep a job (ibid., p.221). While trying to articulate the affective tension that exists between

propulsion and impasse, the contradictions of attachment can be found in the tension between and around the two, in the halting stop-start between movement and stillness. If new learning is to be reaped from delving into the affective intensities that make up an intimate public, we must attune most of all to feelings of unpredictability and discomfort, to everything that comes with being beside one another in dissenting, frictive contact. The fact that attachments so often appear politically detrimental suggests that we do not only *move* towards and away in our fraught attempts to control them, but that we also *stop* (or stall, trip, and freeze) for reasons that do not feel immediately obvious.

My emphasis on Berlant's impasse is an attempt to further develop the significance of intimate publics for the purpose of understanding them in the context of a muted political ongoingness. As noted, intimacy is conceived here as feeling our way to a public belonging, one in which our struggle is affectively sensed and understood. This, of course, includes the desire to change and improve, to progress and resolve the problems that the now comprises. While propulsion of this kind is necessary for any transformative project, there is an equal if not more forceful motivation to also feel rooted in the now, to already flourish in some way – to not merely survive. The power of their argument with regards to the impasse lies in its consideration of current capitalism and how neoliberal privatisation extends to our emotions, whereby "the body is a container for the subject's affects while [the] face aspires to remain all surface" (Berlant, 2011a, p.222). Not only are bodies weighed down by their affective subjectivities, they must also find the

motivation to produce, even through the deadness of it all, an appearance of ease and composure. This is the ambivalence: counterpublic making then appears to take place within the context of intimate publics. The latter feels through struggles and holds on to fragments of respite and joy in ways that do not always translate into revolutionary uprising; moving and mobilising is no easy feat, but nor is surviving.

What do practices of socially negotiated art look or feel like with regards to cruelly optimistic attachments and impasses? On the one hand, there are practices done in the name of love and political radicality that aspires in the direction of Freire's hope and Hardt's embrace of difference. However, this motivation to work towards somewhere better than the present is not, as Berlant demonstrates, always consistent or reliable. What they point out with cruel optimism is how bodies keep going back to objects despite leaving you feeling empty in the long run, which turn trajectories of desire into impasses that disappoint rather than ways-out that fulfil. This broken loop resonates hugely with many artists who are stuck running on a treadmill of grant writing and project proposing with minimal reward, of feeling that the work always comes up short to expectations. In an entanglement of sincere desire to work with others and financial need, of a precarious career and the ubiquitous remit of social impact, lies an impasse that most definitely feels like Berlant's "treading water". The exhaustion that comes from being at the intersection of hope and disappointment co-existing at the risk of cancelling one another out to numbness is often discussed informally between art workers, but there is yet an attempt to weave this emotionally privatised aspect of the work more

seriously within its theory as well as practice. It must be stressed that a socially negotiated art that accounts for intimate publics is concerned not only with congealing outward-facing, counterpublic solidarity, but acknowledges above all the idiosyncratic and just as social ways that bodies desire and, relatedly, are let down. What cruel optimism allows, then, is for socially negotiated art to refract its supposed "labour of love" into more intimate projections of disappointment both with other bodies as well as self-reflexively; getting stuck at impasses might engender queer forms of "lateral agency" (Berlant, 2007) that warrant closer, more reparative modes of analysis and negotiation.

3.2. The affective nodal points underpinning a socially negotiated art

The previous chapter section (3.1.) has been dedicated to laying out three particular theoretical perspectives that underpin this study's thinking and refractions of love. Their functions are more overarching than precise, setting the affective context within which the rest of the chapter unfolds. To conclude that section with Berlant's thinking on intimacy, livability, and impasses is a way of underscoring its influence in this second part of the chapter. The ambivalence of feeling means is something that is increasingly stressed as the refractions unfold; loving is not straightforward, and loving politically does not always look or feel like it is supposed to. In 3.2., two specific loving affects are described through embodied experiences. It focuses on the swell of social

movements (3.2.1.) the corporeality of space in nationalism (3.2.2.) as affective sites that draw bodies together. Before embarking on these analyses, there are some important pivots that are worth emphasising as points of orientation for the reading of these two scenes: paranoid and reparative (Sedgwick, 2003), disorientation and the sociality of feelings (Ahmed), and the "what's doing?" of knowledge (Massumi, 2011). They serve as reminders for a self-reflexive embodiment, which is used in figuring out the affective textures of the relational material in socially negotiated art.

Firstly, then, is Sedgwick's "topography" of research (2003). She problematises the academic convention of deepening knowledge that lies "behind" what we perceive – as if it were waiting to be uncovered. This has already been included in the discussion of this study's research methodology (see: 1.2.2.), which looks to Sedgwick's less predatory proposal of approaching knowledge by travelling "beside". The prepositional change has been an important turning point in this study, which has led to its focus on relationality, on lived and living experience, as well as tacit understanding. This is achieved by asking how socially negotiated art is *embodied*: how do we critically, politically, and aesthetically attune ourselves to our corporeality? If this is a move that re-centres the making and inventing of sociality, then it must in some way also embrace what Sedgwick calls reparative as differentiated from a paranoid approach (Sedgwick, 2003), which digs below the surface for knowledge. The search for depth, she argues, leads to a "hermeneutics of suspicion" that asks, "Is a particular piece of knowledge true and how can we know?" But what we can also ask is what roles a specific

knowledge plays and what kind of influences it produces, thus opening up a reparative means of negotiating its limits and significance with life. As Sedgwick asks, "[h]ow, in short, is knowledge performative, and how best does one move among its causes and effects?" (ibid., p.124)

This brings us to Ahmed's spatially aware disorientation ("Queer Phenomenology", 2006) that considers how the body (comes to) know through living. By figuring out our own, unrepeatable perspective, attention is placed on how spaces beside other bodies are lived and defined. What / who becomes near or distant, possible or impossible? In prioritising the clash of incommensurable "zero points" (ibid.), bodies and objects have to make the ground / position they perch on as they orient towards one another; our boundaries – our porous skin and reiterated limits that make sense only to ourselves – are a queer matter of feeling-as-figuring-out. Ahmed calls this a "surfacing of bodies" through a mixture of perception, evaluation, and feeling, all of which make distinct impressions that are not consciously registered (Ahmed, 2004, p.25). In "The Cultural Politics of Emotion" (2004), she notes how surfaces are made particularly clear in affective economies of pain, whose circulation mark and marginalise some bodies while gliding over others. Empathetic attempts are sometimes made to lessen that divide, but are often premised upon feeling on behalf of others. Such a desire to *become* through the pain violates the intensity of someone who *is* already with the pain, and therefore "sustains the very difference that it may seek to overcome" (ibid.). What this suggests in terms of affective relationality, especially the kind that is sought after in community-based art settings, is the

navigation of our co-separation: a practice "based not on the possibility that we might be reconciled, but on learning to live with the impossibility of reconciliation, or learning that we live with and beside each other, and yet we are not as one" (ibid., p.39). Alongside queer dispossession and recognition of complicity (see: 1.1.3.), co-separation is an important reminder not only of the ambivalence but the contradiction of wanting to understand and feel for others.

The primary challenge in this chapter, then, is to process the complexity of such affective experiences both beside *and* through cognitive modalities. Unlike Massumi's autonomy of affect (2002), the point is not to foreground affect as a means of asserting it dominance over what he calls "cognitivism"; it only serves to flip the two around and instate a paranoid approach of bodily knowing. Ruth Leys (2011) critiques his overinvestment in "anti-intentionalism" most evident in the latter's citing of the half-second delay experiments. He uses them as biological evidence for substantiating a "never-to-be-conscious autonomic remainder" that is "disconnected from meaningful sequencing" (Massumi, 2002, p.25) based on the fact that human beings can only detect stimuli on our skin if they last for more than half a second. Leys questions how often the focus on affect only serves to rehash the same binaries, particularly of mind and body, that many cultural theorists refute. Much like how gossip and teasing in chapter two (see: 2.2.2.) are repositioned as speech forms that function *beside* so-called "formal" epistemologies, the exploration of affect in this chapter, therefore, takes precedence insofar as it insists on the value of the embodied and the in-

between. In fact, unpredictability is precisely what makes affect a crucially queer and feminist theoretical "move", rather literally: to treat bodies as knowing and feelings as social, etc. is always going to incite more questions than statements, given how their specificities are under perpetual renewal. There are resonances of this in Massumi's "activist philosophy" (2011), which asks,

> 'what's doing?' while cognitivist approaches ask what the subject can know of the world, as if the subject does not come to itself already in the midst but rather looked upon the world at a reflective remove that it is philosophy's job to overcome. (ibid., p.6)

Rather than disproving cognitivism, this study chooses to focus on spatiality, movement (and possibly its impediments), and sociality as theoretical possibilities to bring a different clarity to *where* one is at a given point. And Massumi's observation that "what [a knower] knows is its own beginning, retroactively" (ibid.) acknowledges his and others' zero points of orientation, all of which see us caught up with living and doing while trying to take stock / take charge at the same time. This is ultimately the crux of this chapter: to negotiate feelings beside thought, to locate how and where the former can function as a reparative strategy to queerly challenge the paranoid revelation of truths. The questions, then: how can this dimension of felt-knowing be understood? To what extent can the sensuous and the intense be articulated as an embodied criticality expressed through words, through theory? These questions – along with caveats of reparative reading and co-feeling without

reconciliating – help in theoretically refracting the following two scenes of socially oriented love: revolution (3.2.1.) and nationalism (3.2.2.).

3.2.1. The swell and movement of revolution as choreography

In an article on the affect space of protest for Online Open, cultural theorist Eric Kluitenberg talks about the eruption of public protests and assemblies in terms of the "choreographic" — a concept that he takes from digital media scholar Paulo Gerbaudo to further his argument on "movement of the squares" as a confluence of "technology, affect, and hybrid urban space" (Kluitenberg, 2015). Kluitenberg thinks of these gatherings as a kind of "affect space" that is created in order to be seen, heard; it is a culmination of what has already taken place virtually, specifically through the effervescent connections made in social media. The search for acknowledgement results from what Kluitenberg calls "a very basic form of making presence — of marking the fact (if only to oneself) of existence" (ibid.). In my reading, Gerbaudo and Kluitenberg both regard the use of social media as an important platform for the making of these counterpublics. The key difference lies in how affect is aligned within the gathering: while Gerbaudo regards it as a minimisation of social complexity for the sake of temporary solidarity, Kluitenberg describes physical protests as brimming over with difference and contradictions. For both writers, social media are tools of affective stirring; the concentration of people in the streets embody a climatic manifestation of the discontent drummed up online. For Gerbaudo, this "emotional

coalescence" and solidarity is achieved through a "choreography of assembly" (Gerbaudo, 2012, p.12), which would appear to be calling for a greater focus in our bodily relations. However, Gerbaudo's choreographic premise is developed as a preparatory framework "to indicate that the process of the symbolic construction of public space […] has not been entirely 'spontaneous' or 'leaderless' – as many pundits, journalists, activists and academics alike have suggested" (ibid., p.13). This emphasis on the organisation of social movement as labour is also found more recently in "Assembly" (Hardt and Negri, 2017), who go even further than Gerbaudo by calling for greater specificity to "nonsovereign forms of organization and institution" (p.14). According to the co-authors, leadership is conventionally about strategy or how to "see far" while movements are associated with tactics or "the arrangement of forces" (ibid., p.15) concerned with the solving of immediate issues. They argue for the inversion of these roles such that movements imagine what the long-term holds, whereas leadership applies tactical judgments to serve the movement's vision. Gerbaudo's choreography can thus be aligned with Hardt and Negri's tactical leadership, given his focus on the logistical structuring of movement as proof against its spontaneous eruption or leaderlessness. But what he stresses is the emotional over the factual aspect of movement-making, referencing social media in particular as a platform for mobilisation. By stoking a passionate sense of outrage in readers and media users, the choreography of assembly rests in the tactical elicitation of emotions that enable the imagining of a "popular reunion" despite greater differences (ibid.).

He emphasises the mediation of forces that allow an identity to congeal around common enemies as the precursory task and scene-setting for action. But it is also worth extending this thinking of choreography as movement-organising to include embodied moments of physical contact and proximity: movement and stillness, distance and closeness entangled with the environment, surrounded by sounds, smells, textures, etc. How do bodies move beside one another in this space? This is an important question to consider with regards to socially negotiated art practices when so many of them position themselves adjacent to / within political movements. At the point in which the latter coalesce into physical forms like protests and occupations, they live out, even if only temporarily, some of the most significant imaginings of these art practices. As Yates McKee observes about the Occupy Movement in "Strike Art" (2015), it is as much an art process as it is a revolutionary event. He notes that many of the initial instigators / organisers were artists and examines Occupy Wall Street in 2011 as a living, unfolding art practice: it is theatre, a spectacle, an enabling imaginary, and a pedagogical laboratory (McKee, 2015). Such an intersection of art and life far exceeds the way it is described, as if these were two overlapping circles of a Venn diagram. McKee chooses instead to set the scene of Occupy Wall Street in great detail: amongst other things, he describes the "people's microphone" stage, the zones carved out for sign-making, the "people's library", and the biopolitical relevance of cardboard as a functional / symbolic material of Occupy's precarity. Together, they constitute "a *communal life-support zone* resistant to both the market and state-sanctioned versions of public assembly" (ibid., p.102, my emphasis). The question I would like to further

here concerns how these different bodies and practices might be analysed as a *moving* structure, which takes us back to choreography as a conceptual framework.

In "The Choreographic" (2014), performance artist and scholar Jenn Joy examines choreography as

> orientation in relationship to space, to language, to composition, to articulation, and to ethics. To engage choreographically is to position oneself in relation to another, to participate in a scene of address that anticipates and requires a particular mode of attention. (ibid., p.1)

She develops her argument within the paradoxes of bodily knowing and heeds a "saturated temporality" of attentive immediacy. Often, this immediacy is used to describe one of the more obvious qualities of dance and movement. But she hopes to challenge this by proposing a "saturated" temporality, wherein she asks what bodies are capable of saying in order to imbue movement with reflection. Her study on the choreographic then focuses on two key arguments: 1. dance produces a dense and embodied discourse; 2. dance is saturated with – and not lacking in – time, which enables different analytical possibilities that elude a more conventional (and less mutable) grasp of time. She argues bodies-in-address carry other temporalities that unsettle the presumed linear progression of time, something that is similarly explored in disorientation and queer time (see: 1.1.6. on living out-of-time and place). In fact, Joy's saturation of temporality

runs the same course as what Lloyd Pratt calls "radical present tense-ness" in his examination of Eudora Welty's writing – or "[p]ut simply: the future is not" (Pratt in McCallum and Tuhkanen, 2011, p.188). Pratt selects exquisite moments in which the expectant rhythms of reproductive anticipation are distorted, contrasting the ubiquity of clocks in her descriptions of childhood memories with "alternative chronometers" (ibid., p.193) that include rocking chairs as the scene of storytelling, silent reading as a father lays dying, knitting while keeping watch, and writing as the unfolding truth of the present. The ruling order of clock time is challenged by different embodied tempos, which is a task that Joy similarly seeks to meet through a dance orientation. She describes what takes place in the now-ness of address as "precarious rapture", which "breathe[s] in history as present tense" (Joy, 2014, p.25). It involves the clash / contact of our innermost with the outermost, an experience that Joy locates in the bodily act of walking:

> [M]y choreographic attention to landscape seeks not to tether the works to the sand or cement – the grounds – but to activate a mobile utopic thinking that participates in the uncertain writing of walking, making, witnessing, thinking, cruising around and around again. (ibid., p.31)

Bringing this back to the scene of street assembly, the protester walks with others in contrast to these solitary endeavours, taking the form of a body-in-plurality. By its sheer size and presence, the walking mass *speaks* solidarity, exemplifying Joy's materiality of bodily speech. The "precarious rapture"

therefore circulates at a number of levels: amongst other moving bodies in procession as they all head in the same physical direction; and amongst other "bodies" brought to bear by the act of walking – those of borders, buildings, streets, atmospheres in the urban background. The "uncertain writing and making" of protest walking is deliberately catered to a counterpublic making, which must take into account how our skin-bound bodies and the landscape around us are co-generating aesthetic shifts that demand something new from our relationships. Vis-à-vis the landscape as co-negotiator and support system, this reinforces Jackson's argument of art's reliance on "props", i.e. on the supportive infrastructure that holds it up (2012; see: 2.2.). More recently, Judith Butler's "Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly" (2015) also emphasises how the surrounding avails itself:

> We see some ways that bodies in their plurality lay claim to the public, find and produce the public through seizing and reconfiguring the matter of material environments; at the same time, those material environments are part of the action, and they themselves act when they become the support for action. (Butler, 2015, p.71)

In the body's "taint of flesh and emotion, moving alongside the affective traces of the landscape itself" (Joy, 2014, p.37), there is actually a reimagining and remaking of the world taking place in the midst of a counterpublic swell. By turning the functions of structures on their head, the collection of bodies – organic and otherwise – propose tangible alternatives to the ways they are recognised. In living out new choreographies and

(dis)orientations in *other* organisations of space, bodies, and existing materials, *other* modes of placemaking – to deliberately reclaim it from the language of urban renewal – are negotiated and put to work. This is what Joy suggests when she talks about a choreographic discursivity. To resituate this more experientially, writer and activist Rebecca Solnit recalls the affective response of San Francisco's city infrastructure to the 1991 Gulf War protests:

> [P]eople began to gather spontaneously […] to plaster the city with posters that seemed to make the very walls break their silence with calls for specific actions and caustic commentaries on the meaning of the war. Many of the demonstrations here, as elsewhere, instinctively headed for the traffic arteries – bridges, highways – or for the power points – the federal building, the stock exchange – and shut them down. […] The city was being remade as a place whose center did not belong to business or to cars, but to pedestrians moving down the street *in this most bodily form of free speech*. (Solnit, 2002, p.227, my emphasis)

As Solnit notes, bodies walking along in directional unison is already a "form of free speech", recalling directly Joy's claim of the discursive body, one that does so at a different temporality. In co-walking, new (un)livable provocations are called into existence. The city material becomes a conspirator, a dance partner even, who feels our movements and (re)actions, the brush of our skin. Walking as protest choreography enliven relations and reparative opportunities that ideas about them alone cannot. The argument, then, is that

"choreography of assembly" can go much further than the preparatory mediation of emotions and movement-building. It also embodies a different, saturated temporality that reconfigures the borders (and with them, the meanings) of flesh and buildings, bodies and atmospheres in a moment of "precarious rapture". Moreover, there is potential here to disrupt some of the attachments that have us emotionally invested in life conditions that are actually bad for us (see: 3.1.2. on cruel optimism), because the counterpublic movement temporarily reconstitutes the shape and form of intimacy and flourishing.

Yet protesting bodies are often disproportionately restrained and violated as policing forces submit to paranoid ideas of state choreography. Protest and assembly are both endangered from the moment it comes to life; precarious rapture indeed. By homing into the volatility and potential violence of protest – its discontent, policing, and rage, namely – choreography's "utopic mobility" is made affectively contingent: just as it plays a part in the euphoria of counterpublic forces, so too does it work in conjunction with oppression. Choreography reveals itself to be morally ambivalent, pliable in accordance to the material and affective forces at hand. It therefore continues a theme of "felt" complexities that have already been differently stressed throughout this study (see: complicity and dispossession in 1.1.3., frictive communication in 2.2., intimate publics in 3.2.1.). Indeed, dance scholars Gay Morris and Jens Richard Giersdorf define choreography as

> a structuring system for any kind of movement with inherent political

> potentiality [that] can include soldiers participating in a mock battle [and] arranging hostage videos in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian Territories to demonstrate to audiences through comportment and movement the vulnerability of prisoners and the might of the captors. (Morris and Giersdorf, 2016, p.6-7)

Morris and Giersdorf note how choreography – the writing of movement – first appeared in the eighteenth century to instill a particular kind of social order, arranging bodies in ways that both perform and reflect their obedience to power (ibid., p.8). Intending to draw out the ramifications of choreography in the twenty-first century, Morris and Giersdorf describe a permanent state of war and control, producing a dispersed military complex that is made up of increasingly coincident state and private entities.

What would it mean, then, to retrieve choreography's politically radical and antagonistic potential in light of this landscape? The contingency of choreography, as mentioned earlier, suggests that a countering stance is not impossible, but unsustainable, given how systems are relationally negotiated in-between, with and beside whatever bodies they are in contact with. What we can focus on, Morris and Giersdorf argue, is the dilemma of choreography's political applicability, of structuring and disciplining through movement:

> Has choreography also changed in character and objective? Or is there perhaps a need to adjust our understanding of choreography to also

> incorporate a temporally, spatially, and conceptually metamorphous disorganization *that might include disorder* not simply as an obstacle leading toward an end result or enlightening a process *but as an ontological state*? (ibid., p.12, my emphasis)

This analysis on embodied revolutionary movement expands upon Gerbaudo's provocative "choreography of assembly" in order to examine how politically oriented affect is structured. As such, choreography is taken from the logistical work of movement organising to the protest ground itself, where crowds gather and remake urban spaces. But crucially, this move towards a generative third space of politics and dance / movement also demonstrates the inseparable agency of our surroundings as prop and material (Jackson, 2011; Butler, 2015). What we are confronted with, then, is the inter/intra-action (see: 1.1.4. on phenomena and material discursivity) between bodies that include flesh, buildings, and environment, putting into embodied practice some of this study's key ideas for a socially negotiated art. Thinking about movement structures makes physically explicit both the methodological "beside" and the co-enunciation of meaning, played out in the reconfiguration of bodies as they protest (including streets, buildings, and other surrounding "props"). The in-between space of socially negotiated art has been teased out and queerly reframed into a space thick with affective, corporeal, and material forces. Over the course of this study, "beside" as a methodology is gradually reconfiguring engagement into embodiment that self-reflexively (re)negotiates the social rather than enters it. By acknowledging the systems that structure how we move, we can emphasise how bodies and their

inter/intrarelations are generated, enabled, thwarted. More importantly, the conventions of choreography highlights the performance aspect of socially negotiated art through "training, technique, rehearsal, performance, and reception" (Morris and Giersdorf, 2016, p.7) which just might be able to scramble old orders (see: 1.1.3. on the "scrambling" of norms). For a short time, these affect spaces of protest are at the same time forms of socially negotiated art that directly enacts what it means to live alongside others in new and unexpected ways.

3.2.2. Nationalism and the corporeality of space

One of the conceptual entry points to this chapter's refractions on love has been the mandate to "love thy neighbour", which Hardt and Negri problematise as the love of the same and from there, ask that you "love thy stranger" (see: 3.1.2.). The idea of loving the same is explored here through nationalism, a political and cultural sentiment that is increasingly normalised in the western hemisphere. The argument hinges on two key points: body borders and the corporeality of space, both of which shed light on the insidious ways in which nationalism works in the current political climate. The turn to the right is intimately connected to socially negotiated art contexts, driven as commissioners (claim they) are by the most pressing social issues. Art institutions in western spaces must, more than ever, learn to navigate their complicity with xenophobic affective economies, even – or especially – if their curatorial intentions betray a certain political consciousness. Also, as

Gregory Sholette elucidates, away from these "white cubicles of the art industry" (Sholette, 2011, p.20) is the "dark matter" of "surplus artistic producers" (ibid., p.87). They include "an explosion of professionally trained young artists, many from subaltern backgrounds" (ibid.) who contribute their labour to the primary art world even as their own practices work to decentre it. The two are thus interrelated, with the primary art world dependent on a large body of failing artists to invest their time and careers into auxiliary roles within the system. In this sense, an examination of nationalism provides an extremely current context with which to rethink borders and territories through corporeality, providing crucial insight into the ways bodies assert themselves and mark out power – quite physically – in their surroundings.

Following Hardt's "love they neighbour", nationalism can be seen as a self-protective, paranoid love that fears invasion. In this thinking, the body longs to be impenetrable to outsiders (read: those who do us harm) as a means of self-containment. As such, two key ideas are put under examination: 1. how love for the same provides a conceptual framework to insidiously stoke a nostalgically nationalist and racist imagination, and 2. how self and subjectivity is embodied spatially, beside and beyond the flesh we move within. This is done by turning firstly to visual impressions that generate a sense of self through ideas of home, vigilance, and racial unity. Together, these create what Michael Billig describes as the "banal flagging of nationhood" (Billig, 1995, p.10) that sustains an illusion of national selfhood. Following that are two contrasting notions of expanded corporeality, one in which a territorial imperialism is underscored and another that transforms

bodies literally into material borders.

The self-preservation of nationalism

In one of the earlier studies written on nationalism, Benedict Anderson describes the nation as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson, 2006, p.6). Rather than think through nationalism as an ideology, he approaches it as an element of culture, "as if it belonged with 'kinship' and 'religion' rather than 'liberalism' or 'fascism'" (ibid.). In this spirit, he acknowledges the affective attachments that are enabled through nationalism, though his analysis is less interested in exploring the workings of this desire than it is in cultural artefacts such as language, which helps foment an "anonymous, faceless" tribe (ibid., p.154). "Through that language, encountered at mother's knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed" (ibid.). If nationalism desires an exclusivity of belonging that is defined by sovereignty (see: 1.1.3. on the making of a state and self), then we can recall what Hardt and Negri caution with regards to a love for the same. They follow this imperative in terms of the biblical "love thy neighbour" which, as they argue, rules out any contact with alterity. But what if your neighbour in real life – the one who literally lives next door to you – is no longer "the same" as you anymore and speaks a foreign language?

For those who find this change in the neighbourhood landscape unacceptable,

nationalism provides a nostalgic albeit fictional means (see: 1.1.3. on practices that uphold a fiction of sovereignty) of holding onto "the same". In other words, you have to extend into the imagined realm of the nation in order to retrieve the supposed lost neighbour. Another note of ambivalence is found here as desire forms itself around the nation, for there are undeniable echoes of lonely bodies, counterpublics, and intimacy which have been explored previously (see: 1.1.2.). But this is far from a struggle for peripheral or queerly articulated co-recognition that is argued in those ideas; rather, its very intimacy is the common outrage of a lost identity that nostalgically takes shape as nationalism. As Michael Billig argues, the nation is already celebrated routinely in a kind of banal nationalism (Billig, 1995). Our "background space" is turned into "homeland space" in the performative, daily flagging of the nation (ibid., p.43), who also happens to be our mother and father (land). In line with Hannah Arendt's view on "banality" far from being harmless, Billig repudiates nationalism as "something 'surplus'; rather, it is endemic in the world of nation-states" (ibid., p.10). Nationalism exists, he argues, precisely in the absent-minded celebrations of the flag that are then forgotten. For him, the flags hanging limply on government buildings are representative of the memory slip that he wants to revive (ibid., p.69). And following this reminder, we can locate signs of it everywhere: in the UK, it is found emblazoned on packaging ("Grown by British Farmers"), on the inescapable "Keep Calm and Carry On" items, on the money we use. This is a present absence that normalises the idea of the nation while endowing it with the latent power to affectively mobilise its citizens in critical moments.

But the present absence is only selectively experienced. There are times when its memory fails to slip causes uncomfortable, frictive contact; when the flag rubs (the wrong way), so to speak. The occasions in which this happens indicate the affective borders of nationalism's banality. The questions we then need to ask: when does it happen? And to whom? Outside of special occasions like the Olympics when the national flag is paraded and cannot recede, how is the weight of the flag felt on an everyday basis? We can turn to Ahmed's affective economies once more, whose circulation and interruption correspond here with the forgetting and alerting of nation respectively. As discussed in chapter one, this specifically concerns how feelings are socially transmitted and transmuted – or as Ahmed puts it, how they adhere to and slide around subjects (Ahmed, 2004). The impressions they leave depend upon where and how they move between subjects-as-nodal-points; the flag may glide over certain bodies, but irritate or stubbornly stick onto others. In practical terms, the Union Jack hanging in a neighbour's window might not appear notable. But at the same time, it might cause worry to an immigrant like me, because the flag is a living, breathing reminder that the nation cannot be taken for granted. Othered lonely bodies – immigrant and racialized ones – therefore experience the collateral damage of such flagging, for it is the denial of national intimacy that leaves a mark on their bodies. In other words, they are marked because they are *not unmarked* by the flag, since their bodies are not part of the affective economy that are capable of circulating nationalism absent-mindedly. And since they do not have the privilege of receding into the background, they fail to constitute the nationalist homeland space that Michael Billig talks about. Their bodies, like

the Muslim woman's veil Ahmed discusses in her text, "block the economy of the national ideal" and

> represent[s] a betrayal not only of the nation, but of freedom and culture itself, as the freedom to move and acquire value. (Ahmed, 2004, p.133)

From the position of the "felt" flagging, the absent-mindedness is by dint of a collective belonging that fixates on what – and therefore who – it is *not* as a means of self-recognition. Regarding the veiled Muslim woman in the banal nationalism of the UK, the following is assumed: that the UK is *not* a religious state and does *not* mandate modest dressing from women. In so doing, there is a need to emphasise the underside to Billig's banal nationalism argument, because the banality of flagging in the everyday coheres an identity by ascertaining who and what it is *not*, which depends on the production of the other. What feels like absent-mindedness in one body can feel like a pang of fear in another. There is indeed a banality to nationalism, as long as the body is aligned with the flag. At the same time, there is something far from banal when the body fails to adhere and is seen as an interruption or a circulatory blockage to national continuity.

Towards a negotiated corporeality of space

Thus, bodies of otherness are physical borders that interrupt the flow of banal

nationalism. They come into view as sites of contention, aggression, and violence by enacting the possibility of otherness. Yet they also embody other possibilities, which means the body-as-border demonstrates a split between reality and the "instincts which detach the ego from reality" (Bhabha, 1994, p.188; see: 1.1.1. on third space) – or, between an other that must be negated and an uncertain body that opens up new relationalities. With regards to the experience of this body border, critical race scholar Barnor Hesse (1997) and feminist theorist Elizabeth Grosz (2001) gesture towards the body's propensity to merge with the space around it. The aim is to situate the body within its proprietary zeal to claim space as its own while challenging that by emphasising its entanglement with the world. As such, the analysis tackles these two corporealities of space.

Just as Billig scales down the affective intensity of nationalism to the banal, so too does Barnor Hesse seek to question the scope of "nation" through a localised perspective of belonging — or "white governmentality" (Hesse, 1995). His position relates to and departs from banal nationalism within the context of this analysis, given how Hesse regards governmentality in terms that are reminiscent of choreography; he describes it as the disciplinary structuring of behaviours both at an individual as well as social level (Hesse, 1995, p.98). Locating British cities as pressure points for racialised antagonisms, he constructs his analysis in spatialised terms such as "shrinkage" and "occupation", "territoriality" and "contamination":

> For the 'white' body of neighbourhood nationalism the 'zone outside

> the body, occupying its surrounding space, is incorporated into the body' itself (Grosz 1994:79). It is 'reterritorialised' (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994). In this way any intrusion (e.g. immigration, multiculturalism) into this 'bodily space is considered as much a violation as a penetration of the body itself' (Grosz 1994:79). It is probably for this reason more than any other that the discourse of racial harassment in the city justifies itself, without qualification, in the defence of the nation against the 'threat' of being over-run or the 'fear of being swamped' and in paranoiac anticipation of those events violates the integrity, relations and context of the 'other's' body. (ibid., p.97)

Having continuously and deliberately repressed its imperial history, the nationalist British body has been led to believe its own colonisation: it is already (too) open and (too) multicultural. Governmentality comes to articulate itself around this narrative, with the white British body feeling like a line has been crossed. This means we cannot simply take racist animosity at face value, but must literally and physically stretch the body around our understanding of boundaries and nation to help us recognise more innocuous forms of racism and nationalism. To illustrate how the white British body feels under threat in its "natural setting as an endangered species" (Hesse, 1995, p.97), Hesse highlights various forms of conduct that are "invoked randomly and opportunistically" (ibid., p.88). Aside from the bodily, confrontational modes most typically associated with racist behaviour are the more systemic, repetitive ways in which Black and Asian lives are illegitimised by excessive

disbelief, suspicion, and negligence that is encouraged by white governmentality. The presence of racialised bodies materialise a feeling of "intrusion and proximity" (ibid., p.88) within white British spaces because of an investment in such a corporeality. Citing Grosz, Hesse takes into account how the white body thinks of its surroundings as "penetrated" to demonstrate the bodily extent of white governmentality. This echoes the queer rape scene in *The Bachar Tapes* (2000) by The Atlas Group discussed in 1.1.3., in which the white perpetrator jumps back as soon as the victim responds sexually. The rapist can only indulge in his racist, bottom fantasy as long as there is no reciprocal desire, no actual penetration. Once the Lebanese man begins to actively participate, the white governmentality kicks back in and borders are erected again. Indeed, Grosz explicitly calls for greater attunement of the body's inextricability with its surroundings, speaking in particular about urban space:

> [T]he city can be seen as a (collective) *body-prosthesis* or boundary that enframes, protects, and houses while at the same time taking its own forms and functions from the (imaginary) bodies it constitutes. Simultaneously, cities are loci that produce, regulate, and structure bodies. […] [T]he corporeality of cities and the materiality of bodies—the relations of exchange and production, habit, conformity, breakdown, and upheaval—have yet to be adequately thought as corporeal. The corporeality, or materiality, of the city is of the same order of complexity as that of bodies. (Grosz, 2001, pp.49-50, my emphasis)

While the city and the body are not interchangeable, Grosz insists on a "corporeality of the city" that encourages a more sensitive and sensory elaboration of city spaces, for one does not exist independently from the other. Here, she talks about the city as a "body-prosthesis", noting the extent to which the city and the body are co-enunciative. We are reminded of Barad's entanglements (see: 1.1.4.) that are not about interrelation as such, but a queerer, discontinuous continuity between object and apparatus that enfolds the two (Barad, 2003, 2007). That Grosz notes a similar complexity between them, however, does not imply an over-correlation wherein the city is a literal stand-in for the body, with visual or functional equivalents. In fact, sovereign notions of racism and nationalism are facilitated precisely through such unproblematic alignment (where the body bears signs of "belonging"). Hesse has already argued how the linking of bodily heritage to space is already used as justification for racially motivated actions against Blacks and Asians (Hesse, 1995, p.88).

In order to further the corporeality of space that Grosz advocates, this analysis heeds her idea of a "body-prosthesis" as a feminist wager that situates the body in a non-normative relationship with its environment, thus stressing the body's porosity to renegotiations. The "body-prosthesis" refers to bodily tendencies to expand inventively, which keeps it open to different possibilities and meaning-making. She argues that this drive to transform "matter" into "things" is

> in a sense, the first prosthesis, the first instrumental use of intelligence to meld the world into things, through a certain primitive technicity, to fit the needs of the living. The inorganic becomes the mirror for the possible action of the living, the armature and architecture necessary for the survival and evolution of the living. (Grosz, 2001, p.177)

This opening up of the body embraces the strange *to make the new*, which is something that nationalist desire blindsides in their calling for stronger borders. Driven by the inheritance of lineage, bodily sovereignty – understood as a matter of contained and entitled selfhood – comes at the cost of vulnerability and the inflicting of pain on others. To think about the corporeality of space is both to underscore this study's research site and to undo assumptions of the body as merely bounded and human. In positioning nationalism as a defensive refraction of loving feelings, this analysis asks how belonging and exclusion happens through the body and extends into space. At the same time, it asserts that a more entangled approach to understanding the corporeality of space is necessary to make out the body borders that delineate us from them, neighbour from stranger. This means re-construing space as an indispensable part of bodies to pose more self-reflexive questions of engagement and intrusion, transgression and limits within socially negotiated art practices: what kind of space does a project hope to make and what does it actually demand?

Beyond such practical application, a corporeality of space is a way for artists to think about where they are within the larger art system and in relation to

those they work with or for. Representing the art world to the outside and the outside to the art world, artists working in the social realm must reflect on how they are (uncomfortably, frictively) embedded in both. With its borders and prostheses, a corporeality of space tests out inside and outside, belonging and alienation. Doing so not only helps to articulate the relational complexities that the artist is asked to navigate, but gives her the means to address the "banality" of art production's background privilege: who is let in, kept out? How do those body borders come about? This inevitably leads one to question how art organisations are compartmentalised and self-preserving while wanting to be public-facing, which is plainly evidenced by the subordination of education work to curatorial work in many larger institutions. Socially negotiated practices thus function as the body border of an art organisation, allowing the latter to explore its artistic autonomy as the former performs the maintenance work of face-to-face relations. This division is not only infrastructural but gendered, and has been notably critiqued in the art of Mierle Laderman Ukeles. Her sanitation and kinship performances – cleaning floors and vitrines in a museum, shaking the hands of street cleaners, shoveling show, etc. – make plain the institutional reliance on maintenance work (see also: 3.3. for a discussion on socially negotiated art as reproductive "extradomestic" labour) and the continued denial of certain bodies into art spaces. To return to Jackson's observation, Ukeles' art "move[s] from a discrete notion of an art *work* to a process-based notion of the *work* it takes to make art" (Jackson, 2011, p.92). A corporeality of space as argued here understands bodily extension as a kind of work, a (co-)dependent making that takes place through bodies. It is a feminist contortion of the body's

tendency to territorialise and demarcate a safe, uninfiltrated space for itself; in the end, a body needs other bodies within its surroundings – the prosthesis and the prop – to function.

3.3. The role of care in labour and art

The previous chapter section refract two scenes of socially oriented love to think through the affective, magnetising draw that are variously situated in the emotional, social, and political. They present contrasting possibilities, with bodies calling on love – or affects connected to the attachment of love – in very different ways. As noted at the start of 3.2., the scenes are built on reparative reading (Sedgwick, 2003), which signals a move away from the need to reconcile (Ahmed, 2004) by focusing on what the body knows (Massumi, 2011). In the process, revolution is made choreographic and nationalism is recalibrated as part of the body's spatiality. The upshot of the refractions are chiefly the following: 1. the structuring of movement and 2. the corporeality of space, which engender living possibilities of disobedient organising and embodied limits / transgressions respectively. Both are critical aspects in understanding the potential that is embodied in the relational material of socially negotiated art.

This third and final chapter section is arguably another scene of love, which comes in the form of care. However, given the breadth of the topic – particularly relevant with regards to discussions of affective labour in the

current neoliberal climate – it warrants a section of its own. This begins with some historical and contemporary thinking about care in the form of domestic work and labour, with specific reference to reproductive care and its feminist legacy. Extending Silvia Federici's description of paid labour that women take on as a point of departure, the "extradomestic" is adopted in the latter part of this chapter section to critique the notion of care within socially negotiated art. There are three ways in which the extradomestic leads us to different roles and problems of care in socially negotiated art practices, specifically: 1. care and its relation with meniality; 2. the legacy of care in community art; and 3. the problematic conflation of care and service.

3.3.1. Situating domesticity and affect in labour

Having spent the first two sections of the chapter exploring the theoretical positioning of love (3.1.) and examining different, social scenes of affective culmination (3.2.), the final section (3.3.) turns to the most intimate, personally necessary processes of love that concerns care, specifically the kind related to bodily renewal. In Elizabeth Freeman's examination of queer kinship practices, she talks about the importance of having

> a set of representational and practical strategies for accommodating all the possible ways one human being's body can be vulnerable and hence dependent upon that of another, and for mobilizing all the possible resources one body has for taking care of another. (Freeman,

2007, p.298)

She argues that queer kinship is less about lineage than performing a body-to-body legacy that endures through "renewal" (ibid.). This is a restorative process that involves concern, play, and other forms of social life – i.e. caring work, which is something that has always played a critical role in feminist studies. This chapter section attends more closely to the chores, the nurturing, and the maintenance of life to refract the constitutive affects and efforts of reproductive labour, or "the foundations of the factory system" (Federici, 2012, p.7). Even as women in the industrialised world took on "extradomestic" positions within the waged workforce, it was only due to the fact that much of the reproductive labour was siphoned to immigrant women from the global south (ibid., p.108). Such a passing of the domestic buck has served to tighten the work and gender entanglement through its "global *apartheid*" (ibid.), making historical and current forms of racism a pressing issue for feminism.

Yet, as Kathi Weeks notes, the discussion of reproductive labour is mostly concerned with its position relative to productive labour (2007); it portrays a the home world that either parallels or opposes the work world, both of which simplifies the household as "a site of social reproduction" by leaving unexamined any questions that delve into the actual composition of reproductive labour itself (Weeks, 2007, p.235). Asserting the place and significance of reproductive labour should also (perhaps more importantly) address the following: how do we come to differentiate "life" from "work",

and the gendered implications that are attached to these categories? Regarding such a "paradoxical intensification and erosion of gender itself" in late capitalism, Weeks sees the need for "more complicated mappings of the gender divisions of material and immaterial labor" (ibid., p.239). Crucial to this shift is the recognition that "who one becomes at work and in life are mutually constitutive" (ibid., p.246). However, would this not obscure the explicit feminist declaration of care, of its complex significance as work / in support of work? Weeks substantiates: "[W]hat counts as work and life are not pre-given; they are, rather, matters of political determination and important for feminist struggles" (ibid., p.247). The emphasis, then, is not in distinguishing reproductive from productive labour but on *how* we make this distinction in the first place.

Her argument that life and work be placed in frictive contact with one another is a reminder of the different yet inextricable kinds of becoming each of the two makes possible. It opens up the social field to more complex, or what Weeks aptly calls "more capacious" (ibid., p.246) interpretation. At the same time, it withdraws from the home as a focal point, putting aside a place that feminism has always held close. Not to mention the unfinished, situated knowledges located within it that can enrich – both literally and metaphorically – a critical project of affective life or work. As such, the "extradomestic" that appears in Federici's writing feels readaptable here: it suggests a kind of embodied reflection that concerns the home while being removed from it. This would be an addendum to what Weeks calls "life within and against work" by deliberately foregrounding the home, giving it the space

to thrive (and writhe) *in its own terms*. Or perhaps, to critique "life" from the pivot of home, turning it into a problem-site. Far from "re-valuing the private world of the family and defending its traditional values" (Weeks, 2007, p.246), the extradomestic is an opening gambit for the feminist reconfiguration of life and work; the "home" can offer practical and metaphorical tools that befit a point in time when affective labour (Hardt, 1999) presides: what does it mean to "feel at home"? Or to "be at home" with something? As a concept, the extradomestic zooms into the housekeeping of customer satisfaction and the type of care that is dispensed to keep you satisfied – akin to the minimal livability or flourishing of the impasse (see: 3.1.2.) in which there is a curbing of disruptive affects in favour of a smooth, even surface. Much like affective labour, the "soul at work" (Berardi, 2009) is another framework that helps us grapple with a live and work entanglement in which our subjectivity is an employment pre-requisite. In his argument, the soul "animates" the body and is harnessed for "Semiocapitalism" in a new form of alienation (ibid., p.21). Focused as Berardi is on the evolution from disaffected labour (body) to desirous enterprise (soul), he correspondingly atrophies the former: "The immaterial factory asks instead to place our very souls at its disposal: intelligence, sensibility, creativity and language. The useless body lies flabbily at the borders of the game field: to take care of it and entertain it, we put it through the commercial circuits of fitness and sex" (ibid., p.192). In a climate of "high-tech" labour that has replaced "mechanical" labour of the industrialised world, immaterality has become a contemporary form of alienation. For Berardi, the post-Fordist present is "marked by the submission of the soul, in which animated, creative, linguistic,

emotional corporeality is subsumed and incorporated by the production of value" (ibid., p.109). After all, following Spinoza, "[w]hat the body can do, that is its soul" (ibid., p.21). In identifying the neoliberal context as one that is defined by the soul, the body is now anaemic and out of touch, put to pasture. Yet there is still the maintenance needed, even if minimal, for the body to keep going *in order* for a soul to work at all: outside of "commercial circuits of fitness and sex" that Berardi mentions, there are also the more basic acts of bodily renewal (see: 3.2.3.) like eating, resting, cleaning, etc. More than just sustenance for the soul, these should also play a critical part in examinations of affective labour.

Beyond the co-constitutive subjectivities of life and work in service of neoliberalism, the extradomestic is in the position to stimulate a feminist self-reflexivity with regards to the "home", e.g. how do we delineate our activities of bodily renewal? Where do we restore ourselves and with whom? Do we delegate any of the activities to keep our "soul at work"? In its original context, the extradomestic was actually used by Federici to refer to the labour done by women outside of the home. The irony is that immigrant women, primarily of Mexican and Filipina descent, have been introduced as live-in domestic helpers to replace them. Of course, this gendered and racialised relegation of domestic work has many historical precedents, most of all during the slave trade. As Saidiya Hartman notes in her essay on black women's labour, "[t]he domestic space, as much as the field, defined their experience of enslavement and the particular vulnerabilities of the captive body; and it continued to define the very narrow horizon and limited opportunities

available to black women in the first decades of the twentieth century" (Hartman, 2017, p.87). Currently, there is an enormous, booming industry that has developed around immigrant workers. This reiterates the queerly ambivalent significance of the extradomestic both as care and entrapment for women of colour especially, and also underscores the intimate means by which domesticity houses and exploits. It might, then, also queerly critique Irigaray's oft-cited analysis of the woman's body as commodity. She argues that "all the social regimes of 'History' are based upon the exploitation of one 'class' of producers, namely, women. Whose reproductive use value (reproductive of children and of the labor force) and whose constitution as exchange value underwrite the symbolic order as such, without any compensation in kind going to them for that 'work'" (Irigaray, 1985, p.173). While it is an incisive formulation, she does not account for the exchange and commodification of African women sold – with a monetary value – in transatlantic slavery. If the domestic trope was at one time instrumental to exposing the hidden labour of women, the extradomestic challenges it by globalising the home space – maybe even the world-at-home – and queering how we look at it. The extradomestic is a tangible place in which our repressed histories and the present-day precarious workers live as well as work, making it a wide-reaching feminist problematic. In fact, the daily lives of the precariat practically latches onto the home; no longer just a place for personal and bodily renewal, it is functionally an in-between location alternating between office, waiting room, and commodity (see: the temporary renting out of homes or rooms within homes via Airbnb). And yet, the home remains an aspiration for many of us; it is the embodiment of flexibility and

financial autonomy, both of which promote a sense of control through consumption. The extradomestic therefore reasserts the material prowess of the home over the contradictions of life and work. So how might the extradomestic help us grapple with our social relations? In what ways can it rethink the complexity of the personal and the political? In the following analysis, socially negotiated art is centred as the site and practice of caring labour, with the extradomestic as a framework for thinking through and reflecting upon what the art does, how it is positioned, what the expectations are, and what the (care) work of the artist entails.

3.3.2. The extradomestic as a critical framework of care in socially negotiated art

To start with, this section provides a brief clarification of what the extradomestic describes in this specific intersection of socially negotiated art and care, the latter of which is often intimately tied into the practices of the former. As mentioned earlier, it is an adaptation of Federici's term that differentiates the kinds labour performed by women in and beyond the household. Rather than react to this by severing our attachment to the house and home, the intention is to retether it onto both work and life as an inconvenient kind of encroachment, a reminder of its influence. The extradomestic is a feminist articulation of life, exerting a palpable influence on the ways that care and bodily renewal necessarily make themselves known in our relationships. To do so, the extradomestic recalls the affective and

corporeal spatiality of the home, a place that both holds history and promises future challenges. Its capacity to retain intimate knowledges that tell stories about gender, racial enslavement, and precarious labour relies on the permeability and borderness of the "home": its walls structure certain choreographic possibilities but its doors, windows, and gates invite permanent transition. The "extra" of extradomestic draws from this contradiction of holding and changing by reiterating the equally contradictory personal and general associations we have with the home. It is a place of work and renewal, of joy and drudgery, care and entrapment, growth and decline. All this takes place "behind closed doors" that can be flung open at any time, as if the containment itself engenders experiments in subjectivities.

The aim here is to consider the extradomestic alongside the relations in socially negotiated art by situating – embodying – the latter as a form of caring labour. In line with the affective associations that the home brings, we observe how practitioners of socially negotiated art typically take on "residencies" in locations that are temporary "homes". But when art settles into local familiarity as an oblique response, it tends to incite as much as it illuminates. In the wake of architectural collective Assemble winning the Turner Prize for "offer[ing] alternative models to how societies can work" (Tate Press Release, 2015), how might the extradomestic offer a situated critique of care in socially negotiated art? There are three particular dimensions that need to be looked at more closely: the position and responsibility of the artist within a chain of care; the legacy of care inherited from community art; and the reconfiguration of care as artistic service in a

project based on exchange.

Meniality as a critique of caring labour

To start with, some insight on care as it plays out in socially negotiated art is necessary. The following is a reflection made at the end of a project led by artist and game designer Hannah Nicklin. She wrote this with regards to *Teviot Tales* (2015-2016), a community-focused art project she co-produced. It was one of four nationwide projects overseen by the Social Housing Arts Network (SHAN), taking place over a span of 18 months between 2014-2016:

> Do I believe community storytelling projects are worth money from a housing association who is embroiled, with most other housing associations in London, in a housing crisis the result of which is what I do believe to be the social cleansing of the capital? My answer is different on different days. I think some days that taking that money and running workshops that attempt to give people means with which to believe in their own articulacy, to practice computer skills, or to practice their English, and in trying to tell their stories (with their express consent) including their stories about gentrification, the way their area is changing, what they find hard, how things are made hard for them… sometimes I think that's an answer. I know that they enjoyed the workshops I did. Every person who attended one of my workshops on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) rated them 5 or

> 4. I know they enjoyed it. But on a scale of harms, was my commission, and the tacit means by which it implicated me in the operations of a housing association, was that greater? Other days I think that the 60 or so people I worked with on an estate of 2,010 were better off without me and the storygame I made with what they told me. (Nicklin, 2016)

As part of her work, Nicklin has had to navigate the disparate desires of SHAN, Poplar HARCA, co-operating organisations, and collaborators, which is a difficult balancing act. The duty to keep everyone informed falls most of all on her; she is the frontline embodiment of the commissioners' values, interests, and reputation, while at the same time a delegate for the estate's residents. In other words, Nicklin's core role is a relational one; more than anything, she is responsible for performing affective labour and expectation management as social "engagement".

A typical examination of such a project would focus on the process of the artwork itself, i.e. the "storygame" she mentions at the end of the reflections. It would take into consideration what the production of the art involved and declare the project more or less ethical and/or successful with regards to the people it represents, as well as to the demands of SHAN and Poplar HARCA. But this study deliberately pulls away from such assessments of socially "engaged" projects to see how they navigate embodied, living relations. This study has stressed in different ways the importance of nurturing a self-reflexive sensibility, which makes up a crucial part of the art practice's

relational material. For this reason, Nicklin's text leads to a question of positionality, specifically with regards to a care chain. Similar to Federici, Arlie Russell Hochschild uses the term a "global care chain" (2001) to critique the international division of care work. The crux of this chain is that the product of care work – bodily renewal, affection, love – is just as unequally distributed internationally. In an updated preface to her 2012 edition of "The Managed Heart", she links the division of caring labour to the "economic trends of our time": "the profit seeking drive for efficiency, the downsizing of public services, the growing gap between rich and poor, and globalization" (ibid., p.xi-xii), which has driven care into new forms of extradomesticity. Hochschild illustrates this with the "emotion-deaf arrangements" of privatised hospitals in the United States, wherein "menial" tasks such as "positioning a post-surgical patient on a chair, feeding an elderly patient, or helping him to the bathroom [are] assigned to untrained, lower-paid workers" (ibid., p.xii). The "menial" qualifier used in this analysis deliberately emphasises its low status within the care chain while hearkening to its indispensability. In Hochschild's example, this work is about the moving, feeding, and washing of another body. Moreover, meniality suggests a servility that comes with the job. This is, indeed, a critical point within the care chain that comes into direct contact with sickness, disability, and non-normative needs, all of which rely on healthy, well-adjusted, and normatively able bodies. Related to the bare work performed by and with bodies, menial labour can be queerly inflected into an extradomestic issue that looks into the "dirty work" of care with greater criticality.

We arrive at a few significant indicators of meniality: low-pay, low-prestige; bare, servile tasks that are physically demanding and/or require face-to-face contact. Doing so is not to put the labour of a social art practitioner in direct comparison with that of a care worker, nor is it to confirm the lowly assignation of "menial" labour within a care chain. Instead, this is motivated by the desire to ask self-reflexive questions of art's role in projects like those led by Nicklin, e.g. is she being asked to take on the bare task of caring because there is no other form of support available? And where does that leave her amidst SHAN, Poplar Housing & Regeneration Community Association (or Poplar HARCA), individual collaborators, etc., particularly with regards to control and power structures that "give people means with which to believe" (Nicklin, 2016)? Meniality is a line of inquiry that situates the artist in a care chain of official and unofficial services or responsibilities. It allows us to address the artist's task, both in terms of the project specifically as well as the reputation and legacies she must embody more generally. Using the extradomestic as a framework, it is possible to think about art practices as caring – or not (enough) – and concurrently, critique whether the project and art processes in fact constitute menial caring labour.

The transition of cultural democracy to care in British community art

If we are to look at how socially negotiated art is pegged with explicit forms of care and how that might coincide with forms of power and control, we must inevitably turn to community art and its eventual inextricability with

social care. Specifically in the UK, it is a strand of art that began with politically progressive intentions when, under the Labour government in the 1960s, there was a massive increase in funds allocated to the Arts Council of Great Britain: a jump of 45% in 1966-7 and a further 26% in 1967-8 (Hope, 2010, p.16). The unprecedented opportunity resulted in an influx of project proposals from independent artists and groups who did not fit into any of the predetermined categories at the Arts Council. Of note was the large number of projects that prioritised group work with "communities". To meet with the demand, a new department had to be established: originally called the New Activities Committee, it was renamed the Community Arts Committee in 1974, two years after the Association of Community Artists (ACA) was formed in 1972. The initial goal of the Association of Community Artists was to prove their work as art and thus their right to receive funding support from the Arts Council. They did so by situating their practice within "cultural democracy", emphasising its capacity for individual and social empowerment. As a concept, cultural democracy emerged in direct response to the democratisation of culture of the 1970s promoted by Sir Roy Shaw, then-Secretary General of the Arts Council of Great Britain. He envisioned "a programme of education in the arts, along with intelligent popularisation, in order that the idea that ballet, theatre, painting and opera are pursuits solely for the middle classes might be overcome" (Kelly, 1984, p.99). In contrast, cultural democracy

> is an idea which revolves around the notion of plurality, and around *equality of access to the means of cultural production and distribution*. It assumes that cultural production happens within the context of

> wider social discourses, and that where the cultural production arises out of, and feeds back into, these wider discourses, it will produce not only pleasure but knowledge. (ibid., my emphasis)

The focus on the equality of cultural production was in tune with the experimental attitudes of the late 1960s when a community movement was spreading across cities in the UK (Matarasso, 2013). However, the explicit political focus of community art would be neutralised by the involvement of the Arts Council. For them, community art was another category that existed alongside visual and performing arts. As the main funder of community art, the Arts Council were in the position to re-frame the potentially disruptive timbre of "empowerment" within a safer rhetoric of "urban regeneration" that encouraged a homogenised, non-threatening inclusivity. With property-led gentrification plans on the horizon, this proved to be timely; in one move, the government stunted the growth of a countercultural movement while hijacking its egalitarian, democratic aspirations for its own use. Though there was concerted resistance to the depoliticisation of their work, the artists were divided in their dedication to a socialist concept of cultural democracy which led to the disintegration of the movement (Hope, 2010, p.25). Stripped of its politics by the late 1980s, community art became synonymous with anodyne group activities often used to reiterate unproblematic ideas of social harmony and togetherness (Matarasso, 2013). In the 1990s, community art would be reconstituted as "participatory arts", which was an attempt at the time to leave politics behind and redirect the practitioners' focus onto forms of creative engagement (ibid.). As critiqued by Bishop, this has enabled

community / participatory art to be instrumentalised for social amelioration (see: 1.1.4.), which, in her view, produces mediocre art under a pretence of care. There are, indeed, plenty of instances in which art has been used menially, to address the angry mess left by public cuts and commercial externalities; it is the menial caring labour within larger a care chain that continually validates neoliberal control.

The argument of art's complicity and/or its limitations within these contexts is well rehearsed. These projects have nonetheless flourished, with the continuing participation of artists. Knowing that they represent the interests of commissioners, there are nonetheless artists who enter a project with the vague hope that their practice will be socially constructive in some way – echoing Bishop's "social amelioration". The hope is itself understandable and not particularly remarkable, except for the fact that community / participatory[2] artists are also enduring the extradomesticity of a neoliberal care chain that they are accused of being complicit with; facing the impasse of precarious work and absent state support herself, she is in a fight for limited resources. Of greater interest is therefore the practical, situated negotiations she must perform and with whom, what (emotional) affect they may have on her. For example, Nicklin's reflection of *Teviot Tales* lays out the tension she felt as an artist commissioned by SHAN and Poplar HARCA on one side and as a gatherer of stories from estate residents on the other (Nicklin, 2016). Her acknowledgement of "artwashing" on behalf of Poplar HARCA's

[2] By referring to the practitioners as community or participatory artists is not to single them out from other forms of socially negotiated art. I am continuing the use of the community / participatory qualifiers here to narrow down and specify the context within which the artists find themselves.

gentrification process is matched with the recognition that most public money is "tainted" and that "socially engaged art"[3] used for the improvement of "productive citizens [is] coercive and to be reviled" (ibid.). On whether her project "made the world better", she expresses ambivalence: "I don't know if it was successful" (ibid.). She has told me that she has since left the publicly funded arts sector, mainly due to the lack of money "to truly allow a project to flex and be responsive" (Nicklin, 2017, pers. comm., 25 August). But looking at the amount of work she did as part of the project – "liaising" with everyone, "promoting" the project, "speaking" with people around the area, "installing" an exhibition, "among other stuff I might have forgotten" (ibid.) – it would be important to cite the immense physical and emotional resource the artist needs to keep both herself and the project afloat. Unless the critical reflection of the artwork's relations is a constitutive part of the project, there is in practice little to keep it from being used solely as a service of menial care.

From service to exchange and grasping structures of relations

Between 2007-2012, Serpentine Galleries co-led a longitudinal project called *Skills Exchange* (2007-2012) alongside five different older people care home facilities that pointedly sought to "[move] from a paradigm of service to one of embedded exchange" (Rooke, 2012, p.4) in order to "alter roles and well-rehearsed relations through processes of creative exchange" (ibid., p.11).

[3] The usage of "socially engaged art" is cited from Nicklin and put in quotes also to contrast with the study's focus on the material relations of socially *negotiated* art.

They commissioned five "studies" involving artists, researchers, carers, and care home residents:

> Dominant formulations of 'care' often place the elderly in the role of the 'serviced' or 'cared for', as those 'without', or 'after' the peak moments of their lives. […] It is important to note that this kind of work repositions older people (and their carers) as participants in a process, as co-producers, rather than recipients of art that is being delivered or provided. (ibid., p.41)

The attempt to even out the distinction between what everyone does extends to the role of "co-researchers" (ibid., p.15), which involves proposing collaborative processes of *questioning* as well as making. Titled "Modalities of Exchange", the 76-page project report covers three main areas: it offers an in-depth analysis of the art and social care context; provides practical surveys of the five studies; and looks at categories of exchanges within the different study contexts.

The surveys give the best idea of the relational textures of the project. On artist Marcus Coates enacting a "vicarious wish" for Alex H, an older man being cared for at St John's hospice, the director of clinical services asks, "It's nice for Marcus to go off to the Amazon or whatever, but what does the patient get out of this?" (Rooke, 2012, p.36). The film documentation of the artwork offers glimpses into Coate's trip, but it is interrupted by important conversations he and Alex had about the (im)possibility of living vicariously,

the purpose of the project, and about dying. In other words, "[t]he exposure of the negotiations of power between Marcus and Alex […] became the subject of research" (ibid.). This echoes the overriding methodology of *Skills Exchanges*, wherein the "research questions, outcomes and methods [are] shaped by those who are the basis for the study and who are most likely to be effected by its findings" (ibid., p.14). As cited, the project aims to reconfigure the assumptions that the larger society holds about (the needs of) older people. In doing so, it must also question the habitual approaches found in community / participatory art, firstly by unpacking (rather than delivering) care as a function, and secondly by embracing time, uncertainty, and critical reflection, all of which allows the project to unfold in some way. The focus, in the words of the report, is to "[make] use of aesthetic, relationship-building and communicative capacities to provoke political impacts that groups have defined as relevant and important" (ibid., p.23). Backed by Goldsmiths, University of London as well as the Serpentine Gallery, artists and collaborators are given the space to co-author new objectives rather than be tied down to a pre-discussed brief. In other words, *Skills Exchanges* breaks away from a service-model, socially *ameliorative* community art project by striving to become a properly infrastructured, socially *negotiated* art project.

Indeed, art projects like these that focus specifically on articulating the complexities of relations are far and few between. The availability of funding and resources is a major factor as Nicklin notes from her experience, though perhaps what these "resources" are needs clarifying: there is the money that pays for the participation of bigger name artists; the institutional reputation

that enables exposure and discursive resonance in overlapping fields of art and care; the willingness, particularly from the (reputable) backing institutions, to shift, adapt, and seek extra funding where needed. It is a very privileged sub-strand of socially negotiated art, one in which a mutually beneficial set of affiliations calls for a supple and responsive relationality. What this abundance of resource has allowed is a yielding and self-reflexive structure of processes, conversations, and artmaking. Once again hearkening Shannon Jackson, it is crucial to account for the "interdependencies between art and its 'props'" (see: 2.2.1.), which means engaging with the infrastructure that set the parameters for the art in a similarly critical, embodied way.

How might this be done? In *Social Art Map* (2015), a small research project that investigates five different commissioning infrastructures of different socially negotiated art projects, artist Sophie Hope echoes a similar sentiment: "The conditions in which art is made are often hidden, so as to foreground the artwork itself. […] However, I feel an urge to keep poking my head behind the curtain, to check the scaffolding, to see who, what, why and how it is being propped up. This is how all things should be treated, in my view, not just publicly funded projects" (Druiff and Hope, 2015). A co-produced project between Hope and Peckham Platform's director Emily Druiff, the map is available as a free and accessible PDF on their website that anyone can use as a "starting point and resource for people interested in social art practice" (Peckham Platform, 2017). What it provides is an infrastructural overview in two ways: it provides brief and comparative details

about everyone's interests and work development in three parallel timelines of the commissioner, the artist, and the collaborator; it illustrates the dynamics between the three parties with a simple diagram that suggests relational responsibilities. In four out of five diagrams, one finds the bulk of the relational responsibilities directly leading to *and* pointing away from the artist, which speaks to the complex negotiations she must perform. Another notable recurrence is the arrangement of commissioners on one side of the artist and collaborators on the other, clarifying that much of the negotiating concerns the mediation and translation between them. The affective tonalities refract from the generalised "care" to include "dedication, commitment, generosity, persistence, enthusiasm and patience" (ibid.), reminding us more precisely of the emotional commitment that often accompanies socially negotiated art practices.

As a tool, the *Social Art Map* is an analysis that differs both from Nicklin's candid first-person reflection done in a blog entry on *Teviot Tales* as well as the qualitative research on *Skills Exchange*. It offers a pared-down look at the infrastructural building blocks of the art practice as filtered through the three points of contact: commissioner, artist, and collaborator. Of course, there can be many more points of contact to which extra timelines can be added, thus elucidating how "props" in fact support the three parties involved. But the primary motivation for Druiff and Hope is to show the ways these key bodies converge at the point of the art project and to attend more closely to systemic accountability, i.e. how does a specific configuration of relations vis-à-vis labour and responsibility make it (im)possible for a given art project to

"care"? Similarly, the affective, social modes of doing and practice around which this study is organised seek to destabilise notions of self and sovereign in bodies *of systems* as well, i.e. it takes to task the channelling of affect into sanitised service labour.

Socially negotiated art encompasses a vast range of practices, from artist-run initiatives to art fair commissions; from participatory work aligned with Bishop or Léger to community art projects at the art world periphery. The latter's instrumentalisation as social care or "artwashing" has indeed pushed many of its practices towards artistic and political irrelevance, but as a sub-strand of socially negotiated art, it is also the most widespread. In attempting to get a handle on socially negotiated art's working relation to care, it has been necessary to look at community art in practice and as a legacy in order to: 1. highlight how current systems of labour delegation so easily strip away affective entanglements in favour of menial service, and 2. re-include community art both historically and in its current guise as part of the discussion on socially negotiated art.

3.4. The breakdown of love to affective attachment

Exploring love in various modes of bonding, intimacy, and bodily renewal is a way of facing up to the messy, complicit affective position in which socially negotiated art often finds itself. In this chapter, the key motivation has been to examine the breakdown of love into a more complex set of affective forces,

scenes of socially oriented loving, and care in its concern for bodily renewal. It opens with an attempt to re-read Freire's understanding of a politically mobilising love that is at the same time linked to hope and the latter's connection to a liberation theology. The political potential of love that he longs for is then refracted through Hardt's explicit attempt to properly define a love in politics as well as Berlant's cruel optimism, a morally ambivalent understanding of attachments that foregrounds impasses as sites of survival and sometimes flourishing (though they never quite deliver). The understanding reaped from this first part of the chapter, especially in reading beside with Berlant, is an important affective crux for any socially negotiated art practitioner who deals with incessant doubt and tedium that accompany their work: while impasses often fail on their promises, they nonetheless keep us going – which means rehabilitating disappointment to a certain extent and understanding it as entangled with love.

With this, the first part of this chapter (3.1.) sets the tone for a more ambivalent sense of love. In the second part (3.2.), two scenes of socially negotiated love are prefaced by three conceptual markers on reparative reading (Sedgwick, 2003), irreconcilability (Ahmed, 2004), and embodied doing as knowing (Massumi, 2011). These three points of orientation have been indispensable in thinking about the relevance of revolutionary choreography and refracting nationalist spatiality, both of which help to articulate the feelings, experiences, and desires of socially negotiated art. In looking at protests and their embodied movements, choreography is used to argue that they disobediently restructure bodies and spaces; in these

moments, there is a haptic understanding, what dance scholar Jenn Joy calls a "mobile utopic thinking" (Joy, 2015, p.31), that makes present an alternative way of living with(in) the world.

Finally, the third part of the chapter (3.3.) delves into the extradomestic to inspect caring – the "labour of love" – from the world-at-home. The extradomestic provides an alternative framework with which to assess the parameters of care within socially negotiated art. By illustrating the inextricability of the care chain from the instrumentalisation of these art practices, three points of interest are highlighted: meniality as the bare work of care; the depoliticisation of community art in the UK and its subsequent coupling with care work; and how the notion of (skills) exchange might question the role of care as service in socially negotiated art projects.

As such, this is a chapter consisting of affective theories, scenes, and practices that involve love in some way. What this study's focus on embodiment has made apparent is, above all, the inextricability of affect from doing, from thinking, from being and becoming. The intention is that some new textures and ideas are generated between the three rather different approaches. Only by immersing within these affective resonances can one speak of an embodied criticality or a relational material in socially negotiated art. This in-between space where so much gets lost, misunderstood, picked up and reinterpreted is ultimately what makes socially negotiated art a difficult endeavour, and its relations so prone to instrumentalisation. It is this study's hope, then, that this chapter has stayed true to affective ambivalence,

to make space for loving disorientations that contain glimmers of utopic thinking.

4. Praxis as embodied self-reflexivity: situatedness in the practice and research of socially negotiated art

This chapter explores practice as a mode of doing and feeling. For this part of the study, I revisit interviews with artists living and working in Hong Kong whose practices are differently oriented towards social negotiation. Engaging chiefly with the notion of action that underscores Freire's notion of praxis (which I also explore in the first part of this chapter), the focus is on modes of doing that are narrated, observed, felt, and lived. The artists featured here do not self-define as practitioners of "socially engaged art", preferring instead to discuss their work in their own terms. They variously describe their work as responding to politics and society (Woofer Ten; C&G Artpartment); re-imagining how to live (Luke Ching Chin-Wai); and the city as laboratory (Sampson Wong Yu-Hin). They were differently navigating an environment that was brimming with political discontent. Having undertaken the fieldwork in the summer of 2014, the political tension was palpable; four weeks prior, 800,000 Hong Kongers voted in an unofficial referendum for universal suffrage. Preparations were being made for a classroom strike across local universities that escalated into a revolutionary swell by the end of August 2014, leading to the Umbrella Revolution. On paper, the three-month long occupation was about the right to elect the Chief Executive as well as lawmakers of the Legislative Council; in reality, it resonated profoundly as a collective desire to break away from the political oppression that it suffers as a "Special Administration Region" of China and as a former British colony.

The interviews read very differently in the aftermath of the largest and longest demonstration Hong Kong has ever seen. As such, the purpose of this chapter is to make the space for restoring the significance of the fieldwork in relation to the rest of the study's emphasis on the relational material. The aim is to focus on the practices of the artists as well as the researcher in their own words. The fieldwork was originally conducted for a former research question that concerned the "transformative potentials of socially engaged art". The interviews were meant to shed light on the kinds of impact, if at all, of art. What was soon clear upon arriving in Hong Kong, however, was the immense difficulties that would arise from the way the research question was framed and how, in turn, that would alter the course of the study; the "transformative potentials" are never guaranteed, only negotiated in the doing of the research and artistic practices.

There are two main parts to the chapter: the shorter first part (4.1.) concerns Freire's pedagogical philosophy of praxis, which is the third of three components that are borrowed from the radical educator (dialogue, love, and praxis). The longer second part of this chapter (4.2.) revisits the fieldwork process done in Hong Kong at the beginning of the research process. This part of the chapter shifts to a more personal and autoethnographic voice in order to fit in with the analysis pursued here, which is to directly address the embodied experiences and contexts that led to the orientation of the previous three chapters. The primary focus here is twofold: to see artistic praxis at work in greater subjective proximity; and to reconnect this study's position on

socially negotiated art with the living / lived experiences that were its impetus.

4.1. Freirean praxis as humanisation

This chapter begins once again with an acknowledgement of Paulo Freire, whose writing enunciated the starting point of this study. In dialogue, love, and praxis, there are desires related to the social that overlap with socially negotiated art practices. The aim has been to examine these three points as embodiments of communication and feelings – i.e. as the material of this strand of art. To look at praxis – specifically here the practices that accompany it – in the final chapter is to make sense of the many refracted perspectives from the preceding chapters within a "saturated temporality" (see: 3.2.1. on the choreography of assembly) that attunes to the queer time of material experience.

Freire's praxis is influenced by Marx's thinking that is explored below, but a full historical and philosophical analysis of Marxist praxis exceeds what can be achieved here[4]. Instead, the focus is on the way praxis is perceived and woven into Freire's critical pedagogy and on situating acts within the context of embodied experience. Amongst the unpublished essays, poetry, and notes

[4] Notable analyses of Marxist praxis include Kostas Axelos's "Alienation, Praxis and Techne in the Thought of Karl Marx" (1976), which includes a problematisation of praxis in a fully reconciled world that no longer needs philosophy (chapter fourteen); Andrew Feenberg's "The Philosophy of Praxis: Marx, Lukács, and the Frankfurt School" (2014), with a historical overview that shows how the concept has been developed by key Marxist theorists.

collected in the posthumous publication "Daring to Dream" (2007) is a short text – likely written before "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970) – titled "On the Cognitional Act". It outlines some of his thoughts on education and its capacity to structure the realms of what is possible, or the "*what-to-do* […] within the domain of culture and history" (Freire, 2007, p.16). In these scattered notes, he talks about "men and women" as "beings of transformation, of re-creation, and of reinvention" (ibid., p.17). This belief in having a hand in changing reality would be articulated in different ways as his work progresses, but most notable is the centrality of praxis as a dialectics of action and reflection (Freire, 1970).

It is a concept that Freire extracts from Marx, to whom he is greatly indebted philosophically. Articulated in Marx's earlier writings, especially in "Theses of Feuerbach", is his desire for philosophy to find an "exit" (*Ausgang*) that then enjoins it actively to processes of "emancipation, liberation" (Balibar, 2007, p.17). In what Balibar sees as an "explosive" move that attempts to depart from the contradiction between traditional materialism (of sensuousness and life) and idealism (of abstraction and contemplation), Marx proposes in their stead "the category of practical activity" (ibid., p.25), wherein the subject exists through practice. While Balibar argues that this does not "genuinely remove him from the history of idealism" (ibid., p.27), it is more important for the purpose of understanding Marx's influence on Freire to note how the subject's venturing into practice reconfigures her role: she is capable of exerting her will to make change in the world. In "Theses", Marx sees this as a revolutionary practice that exceeds philosophy (the point is not to

"interpret" but "change" the world). To do so requires that we understand "the ensemble of social relations", of which the "human essence" is constituted (Marx cited in Balibar, 2007, p.16). Balibar sees in praxis a "transindividual ontology", wherein it "never *opposes* the individual's self-realization to the interests of the community, and indeed does not even *separate* these, but always seeks to accomplish the one by accomplishing the other" (Balibar, 2007, p.32, original emphases). What is stressed here is Freire's commitment to a similarly conceived praxis, specifically with regards to the dialogical, subject-to-subject relation that cuts through his pedagogy. As such, praxis through a Freirean lens is characterised by a pedagogical intersubjectivity that nonetheless relies on the very "ensemble of social relations" that is described in the sixth thesis of Feuerbach. This means that the conscientisation articulated between action and reflection is crucially a *co-produced* one, not an individual creation.

As the modus operandi of "men and women" (which Freire appears to use in contrast to what is considered a politically conscious "human"), Freire's praxis seeks humanisation as a solution to the dehumanising effects of oppression:

> One of the gravest obstacles to the achievement of liberation is that oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge human beings consciousness. Functionally, oppression is domesticating. To no longer be prey to its force, one must emerge from it and turn upon it. This can be done only by means of praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it. (Freire,

1970, p.51)

Binaries such as reflection and action show up consistently throughout his writing, along with human and animal, culture and nature, intellectualism and activism, amongst others. In doing so, he provides the oppositions for a dialectical thinking on the one hand while implicitly indicating, on the other, the potential evolution that proceeds from one end of the spectrum to the other. "Human beings *are* because they *are in* a situation. And they *will be more* the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it" (Freire, 1970, p.109, original emphasis): specifically within the context of his argument, they will be more *human*. On numerous occasions in "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", Freire puts forward the "correct method" (ibid., p.67, p.111) to liberation and conscientisation respectively. This means that any kind of consciousness that does not "unveil reality" – an expression he reiterates throughout – is (still) oppressed. Therefore, conscientisation comes with the impetus that asks you to pay it forward, to unveil to others the reality you are to remake together. To refuse that responsibility condemns the uninitiated to "magic consciousness" (Freire, 2012, p.83) and thus the wrong end of the spectrum wherein one "simply apprehends facts and attributes to them a superior power by which it is controlled and to which it must therefore submit. Magic consciousness is characterized by fatalism, which leads men to fold their arms, resigned to the impossibility of resisting the power of facts" (ibid.).

In many of Freire's texts and documented conversations, he appeals to a

praxis that is spurred by love (see: 3.1.1. on the role of love in his pedagogy) and applied towards what he sees as the most significant goal of all: humanisation. This idea is generated in proximity to the "dehumanising" conditions that he witnessed in northeast Brazil working as part of the country's Social Service of Industry. The impressions left behind by these early experiences heightened the urgency for change, which in Freirean terms means aiming for consciousness and nurturing a belief of one's vocation to be and become human. "Life becomes existence and life support becomes world when the conscience about the world, which also implies the conscience of the self, emerges and establishes a dialectical relationship with the world" (Freire, 1997, p.34). That is, we can begin to make meaning once our conscience "emerges" from a magic state and exercises its "ontological vocation" to act upon the world. Only then can we attain agency and leave behind our primitive, illiterate ways to properly engage with what is around us. He elaborates:

> I am not a being in the life support but a being in the world, with the world, and with others; I am a being who makes things, knows and ignores, speaks, fears and takes risks, dreams and loves, becomes angry and is enchanted. I am a being who rejects the condition of being a mere object. I am a being who does not bow before the indisputable power accumulated by technology because, *in knowing that it is a human production, I do not accept that it is, in and of itself, bad*. I am a being who rejects a view of technology as a demon's deed designed to throw out God's work. (Freire, 1997, p.35, my emphasis)

For Freire, humanisation takes place through a kind of praxis that strikes "[a] harmony between theory and practice", thereby producing a "virtuous and hermeneutic circle of thought and action" (Irwin, 2012, p.73). Enabling this praxis is the dialogical method that, as critiqued throughout chapter two, does not actually unsettle certain predetermined power relations such as radical educator and learner, given the assumed epistemological superiority of the former with regards to consciousness-raising. This means that Freire's dialectical "harmony" of praxis is restricted by a dialogical imagination that predetermines who knows what and, crucially, whether that knowledge is applied towards transformative worldmaking. As discussed in chapter two, there are difficulties of coming to the point of dialogue in the first place (see: 2.1.1. on the challenges of difference) as well as the need to disrupt dialogue as an optimum speech mode via more frictive forms that communicate and evaluate through unofficial channels (see: 2.2.2. on in-group gossip or the play-aggression of teasing). And – extending to the evolutionary binary of "magic consciousness" and "conscientisation" that Freire provides – there is scope to reconfigure the thinking around "magic" and "consciousness", nature and culture to position them beside one another: what if the transforming of reality is made more capacious by noting the intertwining of the two, where magic and consciousness, nature and culture co-exist in friction, to queerly and defiantly challenge categories of humanness, consciousness, and worldmaking?

Some related questions have been posed within posthumanist frameworks,

whereby the centre of gravity shifts from morality and consciousness (intentional, humanistic) to the in-between (relational, systemic). Perhaps it is more precisely the "between" without any qualifiers, if we take seriously Barad's intra-activity of phenomena and the inseparability of matter as a starting point (see: 1.1.4. on an examination of material discursivity). The emphasis on entanglements resituates the "human" within a broader systemic whole, one that takes concepts like animals and environments into critical consideration. Donna Haraway also calls this "a motley crowd of differentially situated species, including landscapes, animals, plants, microorganisms, people, and technologies" (Haraway, 2008, p.41), a description that highlights the becoming-worldly and becoming-responsive more than the becoming-human with the agency to change reality. The arguments of such a deconstructive approach notwithstanding, it is important to contextualise Freire in his own theoretical development: his earliest literary activism, which set the tone for his pedagogy, was urgently concerned with the material effects of historical and colonial oppression, specifically those of indigenous rural dwellers in Brazil and later in Chile. Praxis, then, is an attempt to make life possible in the midst of "immobilising", "dehumanising" conditions through "reflection and action" (Freire, 1970. p.51).

So far, praxis has only still been considered from his pedagogical reflections. But as he repeatedly notes, actions are also central to his praxis, something that resonates closely with the embodied focus of this study. In "Education for Critical Consciousness" (2000), he describes what takes place within a "culture circle", the format of choice in the rural literacy education work he

was involved with. A series of illustrations demonstrate ten different "situations" discussed during culture circles. Each of them is accompanied by generalised anecdotes that suggest what past learners have said and how they reacted. Ordered in accordance to their supposed literacy progress, the first situation starts with a simple question: "Who made the well? Why did he do it? How did he do it? When?" (Freire in Freire and Macedo, 2000, p.95) From these questions, participants are primed to make judgments of necessity, labour, and innovation, amongst other things that is oriented towards humanisation. As the situations progress, we find by the fourth one a discussion about categorisation. Presented with an image of a man aiming with a bow and arrow, one learner remarks: "Culture in this picture is the bow, it is the arrow, it is the feathers the Indian wears. […] The feathers are nature, while they are on the bird. After man kills the bird, takes the feathers, and transforms them with work, they are not nature any longer. They are culture" (Freire in Freire and Macedo, 2000, p.99). What this shows is a grasp of differentiation as framed by Freire's progress from nature and culture. In the concluding tenth situation, the accompanying image is striking: it is recognisably a classroom with participants sitting in a group turning their attention to the front of the room where the educator stands pointing to a picture of a bouquet. This is a pedagogical end goal, "the democratization of culture" (ibid. p.106) which is not at all dissimilar to the "cultural democracy" of community art in the UK of the 1970s (see: 3.3.2. on its politically motivated beginnings). Praxis enables wor(l)d literacy, and literacy enables a cultural democracy in the agency of wor(l)dmaking. It allows – to use Freire's terms – men and women to become humans, which means "reflect[ing] about

their own capacity for reflection, about the world, about their position in the world, about their work, about their power to transform the world, about the encounter of consciousness – about literacy itself, which thereby ceases to be something external and becomes a part of them, comes as a creation from within them" (ibid., p.106).

Fluent in a praxis that is defined by its ability to "transform the world", learners are not only able question their conditions but challenge them in ways that are legible to the world. Living through what Freire calls "magic consciousness", what is at stake is in fact an affective overhaul from fatalism to motivation for change. Ultimately, Freire attempts to harness a dialectical praxis, but in attending to its "harmony" (Irwin, 2012, p.73), he neglects to wade through its more troubling waters (e.g. how do social relations, branching out to include "magic", non-human forms as well, produce the category of the human in the first place?). Instead, he is keen to focus on a progressive narrative that allows learners to take part in worldmaking through praxis. Defining it as "a creation from within [men and women]" (Freire in Freire and Macedo, 2000, p.106), praxis is a goal-oriented instrument. Against its grain are modes of feeling and doing that are devoid of any creative impulse, that in his assessment are "loveless, arrogant, hopeless, mistrustful, acritical" and therefore "anti-dialogical" (ibid., p.84), closing off praxis to emotionally wrought relations.

Yet his later writings betray the desire to grapple more with the communicative discomfort he has experienced as part of his pedagogical

praxis. The following reflection comes from a visit to a Chilean "agrarian reform project". He asks to sit in with the culture circle taking place, and after some initial pleasantries, the group was overcome by "a disconcerting silence" that was finally broken by one participant's observation. "'You're the one who should have been talking, sir. You know things, sir. We don't'" (Freire, 2004, p.36).

> And it was at the price of having to hear statements like that that I learned that, for the progressive educator, there is no other route than to seize the educands' "moment" and begin with their "here" and "now" – but as a stepping-stone to getting beyond, critically, their naïveté. It will do no harm to repeat that a respect for the peasants […] does not mean that the educator must accommodate to their level of reading of the world. What would have been meaningless would have been for me to "fill" the silence of the group of peasants with my words, thus reinforcing the ideology that they had just enunciated. (ibid.)

He "seizes the moment" by playing an impromptu game that pits him against the participants: you win a point if you know something that the other side does not know. Clearly, his motive is to get to an even score between the two (and they do: ten to ten). The game stems from his assessment of the participants, namely that their "naïveté" ought not to be "accommodated" but be seen as an opportunity to (co-)learn. He warns of "filling" the situation with (the educator's) words, reiterating the dangers of an oppressive

education of rote memorisation. The message here, instead, is to help the learners figure out that they bear knowledge just as much as he does. Indeed, Freire intends for this process to reciprocate, allowing the educator to find out new things from the learners as well.

While Freire does not "fill" the silence, he nonetheless saw the need to deal with the discomfort it caused him by contriving a way out. On the significance of silence in pedagogical practice, education scholar Huey-Li Li argues that it can be an act of refusal (Li, 2004). She notes how "silencing [of] silences [is] the primary liberatory pedagogical practice" linked with "the politics of due recognition". The idea behind that is to "transform passive victims into active agents" (Li, 2004, p.78), whereby speech functions as the reclamation of oppressed voices. But at a different level, it also serves to appease allies belonging to more dominant groups – like Freire, in this instance – who are intent on silencing silence. Li reminds us that speech is not the same as being listened to, much like silence is not automatically the absence of speech. In other words, we need to become more literate in silence:

> A truly liberating pedagogy must be based on a conjoint effort to listen to the silences and to reclaim the silenced voices. This approach is not based on a sequential logic; i.e., listening to silences first and reclaiming the silenced voices later. Rather, it calls our attention to interconnections between speech and silence (ibid., p.79).

It must be noted that Freire does condone listening through dialogue, but in

his conviction for consciousness-raising and worldmaking, he predefines a playing field wherein participation is already in accordance to a humanising praxis. As Li also cautions, "[s]ilenced people's reclaiming of their voices often relies upon their mastery of the dominant groups' languages" (ibid., p.80). In fact, the learners should reserve the prerogative to *not* participate in any game or playing field just to prove their consciousness, socially produced as they ostensibly are (but remain nonetheless directive and couched in Freire's notion of pedagogical praxis). Instead, the learners should be able to speak, write, and exert themselves in terms that are much closer to their own.

As such, the rest of this chapter turns to the exploration of *other* playing fields via a socially negotiated art, wherein artists indeed discuss their practices in terms "closer to their own". Their disparate forms co-constitute what John Roberts calls an "art-political praxis", which "facilitates a multitude of creative contributions in order to divest a given situation of its fixed identity, or to model a different world" (Roberts, 2015, p.218). The crux of this art-political praxis, therefore, lies in its ability to open up other possibilities – or other playing fields – that exceed the capacities of the present. Above all, he stresses its *emergence* from capitalist value structures, within which a suspensive avant-garde finds itself. The friction that is foregrounded in the relational material of socially negotiated art also concerns the emergent, though what has been attempted in this study is an articulation of how it is embodied and how it feels. This means accounting for the failures, disorientations, and impasses while, at the same time, attending to the acts that keep these practices possible despite such "crisis ordinariness"

(Berlant, 2011).

4.2. Socially negotiated practices of space, occupation, and embodiment

This part of the chapter looks back at the fieldwork that was done in Hong Kong in the summer of 2014. This is subdivided into three parts: the turn to autoethnography, the context, and the interview extracts and analyses. The first (4.2.1.) examines the need to take on an autoethnographic voice for a more situated analyses of the interviews; the second (4.2.2.) sets the scene by providing some political and affective context within which the interviews took place; and the third (4.2.3.) consists of the four interview extracts, each accompanied by an analysis that reflects upon the study's orientation and concepts on the relational material so far.

To make the fieldwork an integral part of a chapter on praxis is to recentre the work and encounters between bodies that comprise acts of change. This involves revisiting the situation, the impressions, and the interviews of the research trip to acknowledge the influence they exerted on the study's shift to the relational. Given the theoretical orientation of the study – one that is aligned with embodied criticality – it is important to return to the lived and affective experiences that underlie the research. If praxis is an attempt to live out new possibilities, then this part of the chapter is an attempt to get closer to the point of action. The intention, then, is to describe and confront some of

the most difficult obstacles that provide the context for this study's heavy emphasis on relations as a kind of material; and to incorporate a living, visceral dimension of space and temporality that is crucial to an embodied refraction of praxis.

4.2.1. First-person turn and affective ruptures

Before delving into the four interviews, it is necessary to note the turn to a more first-person narrative for the remainder of this chapter section. In examining the Freirean reflection-action of praxis, the focus in this chapter rests primarily on the "action", which is taken here to be the lived experience of art and its research. The most telling of the process was the fieldwork done in Hong Kong, which resulted in a drastic perspectival shift for the study. The impetus was embedded in the material moments of being there, of the pressure that mounted from the yawning gap between what felt like professional and personal distinctions. The study came to be about this as the research sought ways to critically confront this discomfort by tying into embodiment and eventually affect.

Therefore, a fuller engagement with this study can be enabled by including this gap as part of the research. Doing so would involve autoethnographic reflections, which Norman K. Denzin (2003) situates in the moment of performative contact with the world: "The critical, performance ethnographer is committed to producing and performing texts that are grounded in and

coconstructed [*sic*] in the politically and personally problematic worlds of everyday life" (Denzin, 2003, p.270). Thus referring to autoethnography as "performance [auto]ethnography", (original parentheses) it is part of what he refers to as "insurgent cultural politics" (ibid., p.259). In fact, he builds this explicitly upon Freire's thinking, stating "[a]s praxis, performance ethnography is a way of acting on the world in order to change it" (ibid., p.262). Indeed, much of Freire's writing is autoethnographic, with a mixture of "talking books", confessions, and pedagogical analysis. This particular dimension of his work coincides with the intention here to foreground the living, affective textures that have influenced the course of the research. Here, autoethnography helps "to produce aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience" (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011, p.277). As means of implicating themselves within "relational ethics", Ellis et al also argue that autoethnographers tend to consider "'relational concerns' a crucial dimension of inquiry" (ibid., p281); this leads to a need "to show their work" (ibid.).

The "work", then, involves tackling the gap that was made evident at the very start of the fieldwork. Citing Hartman, Cvetkovich reminds us that "the rupture is the story" (Hartman cited in Cvetkovich, 2012, p.127) – the feeling of a break is what should be examined. Additionally, Cvetkovich's book on depression as a "public feeling" hearkens to "forms of testimony that can mediate between the personal and the social" (Cvetkovich, 2012, p.15), which in her case ends up being a combination of memoirs (part one) and a long-form speculative essay (part two). This chapter section attempts neither to

make material sense of history through autobiographical reflection (Freire) nor to broaden the affective scope of politics (Cvetkovich). The aim, rather, is to employ an autoethnographic approach as a means of intimacy, one that brings the broader argument for embodiment closer to the time, place, and sensations of the gap / the rupture; this was, in the end, the place from which the "work" emerged.

With regards to the interviews themselves, they were meant to be as conversational as possible. This involves drafting questions to set the tone and scene without completely dictating either of them, something that was driven by a concern of power dynamics between interviewer and interviewee (Kvale, 2006). But interviews "tak[e] place for the purpose of just the one part – the interviewer" (ibid., p.483), which meant that it was crucial to keep track of the discussion, i.e. to understand the relationship between the artists' practice and Hong Kong's political urgencies. Relevant to Steinar Kvale's notion of interviewer "dominance" (ibid.) is his psychologist colleague Svend Brinkmann's idea that the interviewer is an equal participant in a "meaning-making practice", wherein she is neither a "receptive" listener or an "assertive" interrogator, but a co-producer in an "epistemic" interview process (Brinkmann in Denzin, 2015, p.230). While perspectives such as these have been helpful in understanding the accountability of the interviewer, the conversations still generated lives of their own. They typically took place in the middle or at the end of the artist's work day, at their place of work or over a drink or meal somewhere informal. How much I was able to "co-produce" was dependent on many factors beyond the interview's specific

dynamics. They also have to begin with colder formalities, such as asking for permission to record and use the information from the conversation, as well as some initial introduction about the research and the intention of the interview, i.e. to find out what kind of role art played in Hong Kong's politics. Yet as soon as the artists began to talk about their practice, there was an immediate need to step back and take it in. Many of the interviews turned into exercises of active listening, in which the researcher's position – my theoretical approach, Eurocentrism, amongst other things – was being implicitly challenged. Rather than reassert interviewer dominance, it was necessary to reconfigure some basic assumptions about what art practices in the social realm look like. Regarding such adjustments of privileged positionalities, María Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman (1983) caution how power "asymmetries" weave through the making of different feminist theories. Their argument specifically concerns the need to differentiate perspectives of "white women" and those of "women of color" (p.580). The authors directly address the former in their article:

> You must also recognize and accept that you must learn the text. But the text is an extraordinarily complex one: viz. our many different cultures. You are asking us to make ourselves more vulnerable to you than we already are before we have any reason to trust that you will not take advantage of this vulnerability. So you need to learn to become unintrusive, unimportant, patient to the point of tears, while at the same time open to learning any possible lessons. (ibid.)

Clearly, the "text" is not completely a foreign one to me, but the time and distance away undeniably made it harder to "read" and to understand. As this became evident, so too did the need to step back from the desire to hunt down traces of artistic and political impact. For the research, it meant putting aside a project proposal to think about what of it was being dislocated and how. From this came the later emphasis on socially *negotiated* practices, which take bodies to be in constant contact with one another. This section, then, returns to four interviews that proved to be the most challenging yet pivotal to the development of this study.

4.2.2. Contextualising the Hong Kong fieldwork

The research trip for this study took place in the summer of 2014. I had chosen to go to Hong Kong because I was born and raised there; the city is therefore familiar and would require no extensive introduction. Additionally, it would be an opportunity to reacquaint myself with a cultural landscape that I know well from my youth but did not explore in much depth. The fieldwork period was bookended by the unofficial referendum for universal suffrage in June 2014 and the Umbrella Movement which began in late August 2014, the latter of which was a three-month long occupation of the city's financial hub and arterial routes. At the time of the research trip, Hong Kong had already been "handed over" to China as a Special Administrative Region for seventeen years. This was based on the Sino-British declaration signed in 1984 between Margaret Thatcher and Deng Xiaoping, which officially confirmed Hong Kong's

return to China in 1997. Part of the agreement hinged upon what Deng called "one country two systems", which vaguely promised a significant level of economic and political autonomy in Hong Kong for 50 years after the handover, until 2047. Yet universal suffrage is still not achieved across local governance: around 1,200 representatives with state and business interests are responsible for electing the Chief Executive, while only around a third of the Legislative Council is elected by popular vote.

After the unofficial referendum of June 2014, the struggle for genuine universal suffrage quickly picked up momentum. The student movements that propelled it were becoming highly visible and their young leaders were often featured in the press. At the same time, uncannily similar organisations were also starting to show up in media coverage, including Silent Majority for Hong Kong and the Alliance for Peace and Democracy. The latter employed the same ground-level tactics as those working towards Occupy Central, which involved setting up street stalls, face-to-face conversations, and petition signing. Giving the appearance of citizen initiatives, the Alliance for Peace and Democracy had a message that deliberately confused the fight for universal suffrage with "peace", as theirs was ultimately an anti-Occupy Central position in compliance with that of the government's. They argued that universal suffrage would be "protected" by accepting the less-than-ideal electoral reform, whereby one of three or four Chief Executive candidates could be nominated by popular vote; the others would be vouched by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Beijing. Indeed, Alliance for Peace and Democracy were supported by pro-Beijing parties in

the government and were in effect trying to reterritorialise the same sites and affects of counterpublic making (see: 3.2.2. on corporeality of space).

It was within this atmosphere that I started my research. The artists that I spoke with work through different modes of tactical in(ter)vention: using contemporary art as urban studies (Sampson Wong Yu-Hin); illegitimately occupying a storefront-turned-community art space (Wooferten); voicing of citizenship as artistic practice (Luke Ching Chin-Wai); and organising a range of artistic events and programmes that respond instantaneously to political issues (C&G Artpartment). The following excerpts and accompanying analyses are part of a much larger set of interviews. These have been selected to critique the turning point for the study, to reconsider the experience with the theoretical tools developed in its wake. As such, the four interviews here are most indicative of this study's later focus on the relational material.

The format from 4.2.3. to 4.2.6. is the same: first, some contextual descriptions for the interviews are given to situate the circumstances as part of the conversations. This is followed by an interview excerpt presented in the voice of the artist(s) that goes to the heart of their practice, which at the same time reflects the way they see it amidst political upheaval[5]. Finally, the excerpt is fleshed out with an analysis that encompasses critical as well as anecdotal dimensions. Together, they draw out the questions, problems, and complications that were engendered about a (lack of) situatedness. Indeed,

[5] I have personally tackled the translation of the interviews from their original Cantonese into English; where there is no direct translation, I offer a transliteration in English pronunciation and a definition of the word or term.

the tools amassed over the last three chapters and the prepositional shift to "beside" are respectively theoretical reflections and a methodological shift that have resulted directly from the trip. With the means now to articulate the affective tensions, it is important to reconnect with the artist's perspectives that unsettled the research trajectory in the first place. The aims, then, are twofold: to retrace four different dimensions of socially negotiated art that is specific to Hong Kong's context; and to address the embodied and affective dislocations that were engendered during this part of the research process. As such, this chapter attempts to depict and examine research in greater proximity to the multidimensional way it is lived out, which therefore requires direct reference of the researcher – myself – within it. Retreating from the constructed objectivity used in the first three chapters, this move to the first person not only emphasises the researcher's inextricability with her object of study, but also helps to vividly demonstrate how many different and often contradictory aspects of the relational material must be simultaneously maintained as part of any socially negotiated practice.

4.2.3. Vangi Fong Wan-Chi and Roland Ip Ho-Lun

Fong and Ip are members of Wooferten, a community-oriented art space co-run by a small group of artists and neighbourhood residents. Started by ten artists in 2009, all but one of the founding artists, Lee Chun-Fung, have left. Wooferten was situated in the middle of Yau Ma Tei, a working class neighbourhood in the Kowloon peninsula of Hong Kong. When I interviewed

Fong and Ip, they were in the middle of negotiating with the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), who had stopped funding them a year before. When I spoke with them, they were occupying the space and continuing to hold regular as well as pop-up events. The following are two interview excerpts in which: 1. Fong talks about the potential loss of Wooferten and 2. Ip reflects upon the significance of community and the limits of what they do.

(Fong's words)

I believe in a physical space. I think it empowers people's actions and gives them motivation. Without [the space], it would be difficult to get involved with printed media or *baai hui* [set up a street market]. And there'd be no place to meet. It's because of Wooferten that I've come to know Yau Ma Tei. […] With regards to Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), we wanted to stress the importance of a physical space. We've also done some research on their involvement in Shanghai Street and found out that there were six more units on the block. At one point, artists and organisations were invited to come here but HKADC soon realised that there were structural issues with some of the spaces upstairs. The units have since been returned to the government one by one. There is now Wooferten and two remaining units upstairs, one of which is used as a workshop and the other for storage. When that initiative ended in 2012, HKADC threatened to return even these two to the government. But if the arts are already resource strapped, why would you give anything up so willingly and easily? […] Obviously having a space in Hong Kong for any artist or arts organisation is crucial. The fact that [HKADC] do not see it as an important resource […] is ridiculous. As a funding

body, they have to reflect on how their resources have not increased over the last decade. They can't even safeguard what little they have got. What they do with their assets is ultimately their choice, but why are they spending HK$5 million on the Venice Biennial instead of supporting small to mid-size art organisations? That sort of money can mean the survival of tens of organisations like ours over a period of a year. There are currently so few independent art spaces that we have to ask what is going on, and why young artists do not feel they can [take the risk to] start anything. Now that Wooferten has lost its funding, there is no way we can afford supporting a space of our own. Does that mean we must now vanish? This is clearly suggested by their actions.

(Ip's words)

My own definition [for community] is pretty narrow. For a project like Wooferten, it would be Yau Ma Tei residents. [Co-organising artist] Fung would say that anyone coming to the space would be a *kai fong* [an acquaintance, usually from the neighbourhood]. For me, it's more district oriented. I sometimes feel embarrassed, since I am not from the area. You just aren't as well positioned to know as much when you don't live here. If you were somehow involved with the life of the neighbourhood, you would have memories embedded here. Otherwise, you are divorced from the context, without connection. Having said that, our projects try to make connections, like when we *baai hui* [set up a street market]. The connection lies in choosing the street where there are already small *pai dong* [street stalls]. And why *pai dong*? Because they are extremely suppressed. It is as if

there should be substantial networks when you speak of communities. For instance, district councillors: they have roots; they have strategies, resources, and people that they can mobilise. Vangi and Fung might feel differently. Personally, I want [our work] to be able to compare with district councillors. They have some dominance and are capable of attracting attention, establishing a presence. They can reach out to a community at a level that we can't achieve. We can give little things away, like *fai chun* [greetings written for Chinese New Year] moon cakes, etc. But we just don't have the power to multitask; there are points we touch but can't sustain. A lot of the *kai fong* might think we are just "playing around" or making little gestures. Sometimes, you might be better off sticking with art and not getting too involved in thinking about matters of community.

Wooferten was one of the first artist groups I interviewed for this study. Operating from a ground-floor storefront, they were one of the more visible, accessible artist projects that were attempting to make sense of their role as artists in Yau Ma Tei, a working-class neighbourhood on the brink of gentrification. The first time I visited was in 2013, when the initiative had already been there in different incarnations since 2009. Most of the artists involved had already moved on, leaving Lee Chun-Fung as the only original member along with a few more recent recruits, including Fong and Ip whom I interviewed. The space itself was casual and welcoming; part drop-off point, part living room. When I visited, the bright green walls were plastered with

newspaper clippings and poems written by a *kai fong*. Placards that sought political recognition and vindication for "June 4th" — the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 — were taped onto the shop windows, facing the public beyond. But for the interview, I met Fong and Ip at a tiny eatery called "So Boring", which consisted of a small kitchen with outdoor seating right by an underpass. Fong was working there that night; she co-runs the enterprise with a few of her friends, who charge their customers on a pay-as-you-like basis. While I had hoped to discuss some of their recent projects, it was clear that their minds were on the survival of Wooferten. Our conversation centred around their negotiations with HKADC and their future work. As shown in the excerpts, Fong's concerns were pragmatic — mainly to do with the initiative's continuation and the infrastructures that enable/inhibit them — whereas Ip's tended to be critical of their political efficacy as well as their ability to bring a community together. These are the two thoughts that I would like to hold onto for further examination.

Firstly, Fong's critique leans into the inseparability of their work at Wooferten from the relations that they have, in particular those with HKADC and the *kai fong*. When the group eventually dissolved in November 2015, they had been occupying the Yau Ma Tei storefront for two years without any official funding. In a statement released at the end of their tenure, the group noted how the networks and connections made through the space gradually dispersed elsewhere (Wooferten, 2015), in effect making their two-year standoff with the HKADC a transitional period for themselves and the core *kai fong*. The artists occupied because they wanted accountability; while the

project was over in the eyes of HKADC, the artists had nurtured relations as part of the art, which disrupt / extend beyond the normal art project timeline. Realistically, the occupation probably did little to the community-based art policies of HKADC, given that they finally threatened legal action against the artists to force them out of the space. So what did the occupation achieve? There are two main results that I would like to explore through the conceptual tools of this study: firstly, the disoriented relations between funder, artists, and *kaifong*; and secondly, the extradomestic work that opened up the (private) problems of administration.

The occupation can be seen as a period of suspended expectations, which provided the critical space to ask different questions of funder, artists, and *kai fong*. While the impetus for staying put was, at first, to resist the detached mechanics of art administration, the actual results were two years of difficult yet productive dis-/re-orientations (see: 1.1.6.) that forged new relations between artists and *kai fong*. In the interview, Ip notes how artists "made [them]selves more *kai fong*" while the *kai fong* were becoming more like artists. These are the productive wrong turns that come out of non-compliance, that cast a queerer notion on the notion of roles and responsibilities. At the same time, the occupation also brought out art administration from behind closed doors. Preferring the banal anonymity of background space (see: 3.2.2.), such government-run infrastructure tend to support specific sectors or interests, the latter of whom end up as living representations of the former. Yet the occupation period provided the opportunity, as Fong noted, to see into the administration's poor asset

management and to challenge their dismissal of emerging art initiatives. Thus positioned, the occupation embodies a spatial resolve that demands face-to-face renegotiation on the one hand and performs the community's continuation on the other.

Recalling the extradomesticity in chapter three (see: 3.3.1. and 3.3.2.) that seeks to interrogate care with regards to labour, the occupation was additionally a form of maintenance work, of housekeeping. From sitting in on the regular meetings between artists and *kai fong*, it struck me how infrequently the artists spoke, and if so, it was only to verify what a *kai fong* had said. Part of this was likely due to my intrusive presence; another is that the artists were performing the extradomestic work of active listening that would eventually see the *kai fong* take over the space completely (Ip recounted a draft three-year plan for Wooferten that would gradually cede accountability over to the *kai fong*). Also crucial to the occupation was calling for greater visibility and responsibility of the infrastructure, i.e. the funding body. The artists' refusal to leave, while functioning as a physical reclamation of space, was also meant to invite and incite HKADC's physical presence so that the latter might acknowledge, however awkwardly, the living aspects of a bodily and materially negotiated practice. Wooferten claim in their final group statement that one of their aims was *pung jong sat yim* — literally "experiments of encounter / collision". Until the end, frictive contact was something the artists vigilantly maintained, not in order to satisfy a commissioning body's public-facing, participatory narrative, but to take seriously the embodied uncertainties of a socially negotiated art context.

Especially difficult with this particular interview was the probable end of their project, which the artists were still trying to fight at the time. My former research parameters focused on the forward thrust of transformation, which gave little leeway to reflect on the pedagogies enabled through failed practices (see: 1.1.5.). Over time, I felt a growing need to think through the significance of failure as well as tackle the discomfort between the artists and me, a sentiment that shows up everywhere in socially negotiated practices. This early interview already demonstrated the need for a theoretical framework that would stretch beyond the impact-driven thinking of "transformation" to encompass these embodied relations between artists and *kai fong*, between artists and funders, and between the art and its reflection.

4.2.4. Sampson Wong Yu-Hin

Wong is an artist and geographer who co-founded the Hong Kong Urban Laboratory and EmptySCape. I interviewed him a few months after he and his colleagues of EmptySCape completed an intensive, year-long project in Ping Che Village, which is one of the last remaining rural areas in New Territories, Hong Kong. In collaboration with villagers, artists, and researchers, their efforts culminated into a two-week festival that brought a lot of footfall as well as some "much-wanted" media attention, to quote Wong. Within a matter of weeks after the interview, the Umbrella Movement began, for which he eventually co-convened the Umbrella Visual Archives to discuss the

afterlife of the cultural and material artefacts made during the three-month long protest.

(Wong's words)

I'm dissatisfied with the discourse on ruins in Hong Kong as there is a predatory approach on finding beautiful ruins, taking pictures, and not telling you where they are from. Ruins have to do with political economy; why certain ruins appear allow us to understand the development of cities through their traces.

I visited the northeast [of Hong Kong] and went to a village school that felt like a lost oasis. It had been abandoned for eight years and villagers were still taking people there. After we got the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) funding, I wanted to do something with a positive resonance. In September 2012, we all went for the first time as a team. By January 2013, we got to know the villagers better and discussed the event with them. They were doing guided tours on the weekends and were happy when people came. So I said that we would like to do something similar, like a "big guided tour" that would bring lots of visitors to the village. That was what started the conversation. We collected oral histories about the school and put together a history of the place. The situation is complicated, because even though Ping Che is bound for urban regeneration, there are no solid plans yet. What they are doing now is getting people to visit, and to spread the word about the need to protect this place. Art becomes a political means of convincing people to travel the distance and pay a visit. As we started to get more involved with

the school, it felt less and less of a ruin. Artists coming to the village were fascinated with the stories and the villagers talked extensively with them. Within a few months' time, the villagers could understand what the four-day event[6] was about.

[After the festival], there was some internal tension about whether to stay or leave. Opinion was divided within our group of eight; I wanted to stay in Ping Che [to think about] alternative development, the possibility of art in regeneration. […] To use art as part of development, to conceive of art as providing other possibilities, with other values: would that be enough to resist urban encroachment? That's pretty ambitious. In this sort of environment, it is hard to imagine saying to the government, "hey, don't touch this area, we have a vibrant artistic community!" Yet there is an urge to attempt that.

In my interview with Wong, he gave examples about the clash between imagining "a poetic gesture" like the Ping Che Village festival versus its mundane, organisational reality. He recounted one of the first art projects he co-created – designed to be part kidnap, part Chinese whispers – which turned out to be a logistical nightmare. He also talked about his experience with Echigo-Tsumari, an international art festival set in a rural area of Japan. Wong volunteered there as a student and saw how it worked in surreptitious ways to revitalize the area and generate awareness for it. Though he was

[6] The Ping Che Village Festival of 2013 took place over four days of events spread across two weekend blocks.

angered by the volunteers' poor living conditions and lack of wage, he could also see "why so many young Japanese people went there for free": it was the tangible relations and solidarity with the local villagers that seemed to resonate the most. Wong had hoped to do something in Ping Che that would, as he says in the excerpt, "provide other values" to the area the way the festival did for Echigo-Tsumari. This willingness to instrumentalise cultural capital in order to bring political issues to bear nonetheless results in a product that could very well be indistinguishable from urban regeneration projects.

I thought about his deliberate avoidance of a more confrontational antagonism and what another artist Wen Yau (whom I also interviewed but is not featured here) said about the need for multiple agonistic approaches, even explicitly referencing Mouffe's artistic agonism (see: 2.1.3. on dissensus and art). It alludes to a kind of opportunism that is an important lesson when outright refusal is not an option. This means renegotiating the terms of action to look for other openings, other resources to tap into. Such a pragmatic mode of operation is absolutely necessary for Hong Kong at this moment, itself an obvious fact for anyone who recognises the city's political stakes. The fact that this was more of a realisation only heightened my already jarring sense of displacement, a feeling that would come to greater focus over the course of the research.

These two questions, then, form part of a self-reflexive practice that I want to perform in this chapter. Both point towards the need for a physically

negotiated presence – and tellingly, it is the salience of body, affect, and spatiality that have become this study's backbone. The brutal privatisation, property speculation, and dire lack of space have become urgent political issues that were being played out in some of the more socially oriented art practices in the city. Many of the interviewed artists were responding to the cycle of demolition and rebuilding that erase places along with the cultures and histories they enabled. In fact, a series of publications on the overlapping areas of art, activism, and the struggle for space have appeared in the few years since – for instance: "Creative Space: Art and Spatial Resistance in East Asia" (Hui and DOXA collective, 2014); "Wooferten's Art / Activist in Residence" (Lee, 2014); "Community Turn: Social Practice in Hong Kong Art" (Phoebe Wong, 2016). It has been the focus of academic and activist reflection, with the richest pieces of research coming from those who are closest to the experience. More broadly, the lack of space also extends to the cultural landscape, which, in the scarcity of institutional exhibitions or collections, relies heavily on auction houses and art fairs for the city's cultural offer (Watts, 2013). The social and intellectual space needed for the production and discussion of art, much like Hong Kong's physical space, is similarly dominated by commercial interest.

This demonstrates a concern that grew steadily during my time in Hong Kong, which relates to a professional responsibility of ceding narrative space to artists and other cultural workers whose interests are directly entangled with Hong Kong's political and cultural dynamics. The examination of the corporeality of space (see: 3.2.2.) and how our bodies move through it – and,

more importantly, how they sometimes cannot move through it – enact borders that allow as well as limit intimacy. This ties in with the many bodily dissonances that I experienced while in Hong Kong: I was a conspicuous but not-quite foreigner; a nomad who comes and goes; a returnee using "work" to reconnect with a lost cultural identity. In acknowledging my own cultural and racial differences after years spent in white European territoriality (Hesse, 1997), I unwittingly cemented a stable yet equally illusory Hong Kong identity that was shattered the moment I arrived. At the most sensory level, this meant that crowds felt too close, the pollution too severe, and the pace of life at street level too inescapable, something that is echoed in Grosz's description of how cities and organic bodies "produce, regulate, and structure" (Grosz, 2001, p.49) one another: when a body like mine is out of sync and place, it can no longer glide absent-mindedly along with the background, but rubs up against the incongruent textures of the city (see: 3.2.2. on the banality of flagging). These are moments in which friction is most clearly felt.

At the same time, there was the powerfully emotional coalescence of a Hong Kong counterpublic that felt and appeared to be the complete inverse to my own displacement. In the Ping Che Festival that Wong co-organised, there was an earnest desire to witness and feel the physicality of community, which demonstrated how certain social affects were being negotiated towards a political focus (see: 1.1.2.). This was foregrounded in much of the conversation with him as well; the prerequisite for participation was not merely in the form of counterpublic longing felt from afar, but from a "here" that demanded direct action. Indeed, there was a more visible collective

praxis of speaking out, self-organising, and protest ambitions in the name of love and rage (see: 3.1.1. on Freirean consciousness raising on an emotional level), the convergence of which threatened to explode into a revolutionary event. It also posed a sobering question of commitment and presence that I could not adequately answer. Undeniably, the subjects of Hong Kong, transformation, and art would remain entangled with the study and with the issue of embodied displacement that would refocus the research entirely.

4.2.5. Luke Ching Chin-Wai

Ching is an artist and an occasional security guard. For the interview, we met for a meal at an underground station hall in Tai Po on his way back from work. He was one of the key founding members of Wooferten in 2009, though he left the group after the first two years. The conversation centred around a few topics, including the rift between art and the art market, the political importance of imagination, and the role of art as the "indicator" of the unnoticed.

(Ching's words)

There are increasingly more people working in the arts whose identities are blurring: for instance, am I an artist or a social movement participant? What and how we produce is also telling; if it is a bit *gwaai* [strange; unconventional], then that might be read as art. We have really developed in terms of citizenship and voicing what we think. There is currently a group of

people in Hong Kong who happen to have an art practice or some art training. They will quite naturally voice themselves through a kind of imaginative lens, as citizens. If imagination turns into art, then this becomes a new genre. As far as I'm concerned, we are all voicing. Whether we do it in a *gwaai* or creative way, we are doing so as citizens. There is no substantial difference between [artists and citizens] except in expression. […]

Recently, I was in Shenzhen's cultural district. And as expected, it was basically populated by cultural institutions owned by rich people. They have an "Overseas Chinese Town" and the security personnel all wore camouflage army gear. It was funny and ridiculous, having these fake army people around. I decided also to dress up in camouflage gear for an art opening some time later. When the security saw me, they started to laugh. Everyone knew that I was a fake security person just like the guard was a fake army person. I *indicate* that fact [by] mocking his uniform in my little action. […]

Over time, I worry whether this sort of [art] practice can become habitual, as it is already perfectly packaged in a set of *flâneur* aesthetics. What I think is important to ask is where we position the process of imagination within daily life. I find it hard to say whether this is art or not, but the point is to have a collision between imaginations. The action is a catalyst and I think that's where we are heading. Every profession and every sector has its own framework, but art doesn't. Or at least it challenges frameworks. For me, this is why it is radical. I like finding gaps in real situations. And I like change; you go to museums and other venues and the exhibitions are always the same.

[…] When things stay the same, imagination stops. People need to keep imagining. A docent leading you on a tour can show you unexpected things, for instance. Like, how much it cost for that tree outside [the Hong Kong Art Museum] to be imported from Canada; it's the most expensive tree in Hong Kong! To be shown things like that and to indicate signs of other possibilities, that's what I would like to see.

To start with, Ching's practice is not conventionally "socially engaged", i.e. he does not seek to artistically collaborate with others. In fact, there was a slight shift in its meaning from one linguistic and cultural context to another. Knowing that I was in Hong Kong to do research on "socially engaged" practices, a few artist acquaintances in Hong Kong suggested Ching as a potential interviewee. Of the thirteen interviews conducted, the notion of "socially engaged" art was almost always taken to mean "politically engaged", which sees art as a means of responding to socio-political concerns. The impossibility of aligning the history and practices of art in Hong Kong with those in the western hemisphere was one of the most important reminders of this research trip, stressing the localised iterations of art practices; where "socially engaged" art expands and contracts around a history of the avant-garde, community art, and participation as explored in the Euro-American contexts, it takes on a more explicitly political dimension in the oppressively capitalist environment like that of Hong Kong's. While I understood that Ching's practice consisted primarily of performative pieces done in public

spaces, I wanted to meet him in order to have a better understanding of the ways in which his work is read as "socially engaged" specific to Hong Kong.

At that time, he had already been looking into the labour conditions of security workers for a number of years (and he continues to do so now). As the excerpt of his interview illustrates, Ching does not see a hard and fast delineation between an artist and a citizen, a campaigner, or an activist. He substantiates: "I think that's a capitalist problem, how you compartmentalise things. [….] Yet when you follow the rhythm of your daily life, you don't have these borders". Despite fitting quite neatly into the "transformative" part of my former research parameter, it proved hard to situate him more convincingly within what I grasped as "socially engaged" art. My understanding of the latter was restricted by Euro-American notions of collaborative artistic work in extra-gallery spaces that did not yet account for the body or affect. In retrospect, it was this particular interview that both these aspects – body and affect – were first brought together with "socially engaged", thus "indicating" (to use Ching's descriptor) the trajectory of this study towards social negotiation. I would therefore like to examine more precisely how our conversation about his practice functioned as a gateway to theorising a more affectively ambiguous and embodied socially negotiated art.

Ching expressed ambivalence about belonging to any artistic "category", which led to a discussion about the contrivances of identities and borders. Motivated by the desire to continue making art in an environment where studio-like spaces were scarce and expensive, Ching was "forced" onto the

streets early on in his career. Yet he found *flâneuring* as an art practice "too easy" to achieve in a city as dense as Hong Kong. He said he wondered at the time whether there was "content" to his work – "or was it just texture?" He rephrased this question: "is it possible to [use my artistic point of view to] re-imagine a different, more livable 'daily life'"? His initial curiosity about security guards slowly bled beyond the boundaries of artistic labour into personal, political, and economic labour; he actually trained and worked as a security guard in different places, including the Hong Kong Museum of Art as well as at a fresh food market. He repeatedly states, "I'm not sure whether this is an artwork", suggesting that the direction and commitment of what he is doing – the overidentification and subsequent decade of training, working, and campaigning as a security guard – can (no longer) be art. He has subsequently campaigned for labour rights, rather specifically for chairs and the right to sit down as a cashier or as a worker who mostly stands or walks as part of their job.

The conversation with Ching influenced my research in what felt like a vague way at the time, because it unsettled many preconceptions that I have since hoped to resolve. How do such practices of embodiment (not) fit in within a landscape of so-called "socially engaged" art? Clearly, there is an assumption or performance of the security guard role that renders it a process of "becoming". I have already examined Raunig's framework of art and revolution whereby "concatenations" of the two are foregrounded in "constituent" change – namely, in a "becoming" that is set in deliberate contrast to the rupture of a momentous event (see: 1.1.5.). Yet his analysis

emphasises the meeting and divergence of art and revolution as *separate* machines, which does not account for their intertwining in an embodied hyper-performance such as Ching's. At once self-reflexive and problematic, his enactment does in fact follow that slower, constituent temporality highlighted by Raunig; he also becomes more security guard, echoing Ip's sentiment from the Wooferten interview and how the artist group made themselves "more *kai fong* (more like a neighbour)" (see: 4.2.2.). Crucially, Ching is neither concerned with processes of becoming nor with "socially engaged" tropes of intersubjective relationality, but with what he calls a "messing up of borders" that are constantly under negotiation and alive. This means that there is no bringing *together* of separate entities (be they relational bodies or machines); instead, he disputes the very discreteness of entities, of identities and occurrences, etc. In practice, this translates into a disorientation of everything that they sit within – of space, time, and bodies (but most of all his own body) – which engenders new corporealities of space (see: 3.2.2.).

He observes: "[Gallery security staff] are trapped with works of art in a small space with no windows all day long; the people who are closest to art end up hating art the most". Noting that they were never seated, Ching held onto a fleeting observation and used it as an entrance point to think through the emotional and physical effects of security labour (isolating, physically taxing, mind-numbing). As with the *flâneur* practice that immerses his body into the city, he likewise immerses his body into that of the guard – a move that I now recognise as a pivot point for a different research focus, allowing

knowledge to occur as you live it. From the perspective of a researcher coming to terms with my lack of situatedness, Ching's security guard work was at once touching as well as brazen. It was an artistic mode that "indicated" towards other questions of art and social negotiation: rather than asking whether artistic practice has the potential to "transform" a site or thing, what if the practice is itself the transformation? That is, social "engagement" would no longer be an instrument *for* change but rather *embody* change. Art, body, and transformation meet and merge, which as a formulation still falls short of Ching's active "messing of borders". His practice, then, ultimately coaxed a different line of inquiry out of a research that no longer attempts to gauge the influence of art on society or vice versa. It defies the obligation to name and defend what this art is, opting instead for an evaluative sense of touch, for being beside, and for a material focus on how connections take place. This interview was the first palpable shift towards a method that is steeped in ambiguity and not-knowing, signalling the embodied, affective field out of which Ching's unwanted "borders" or categories are created in the first place. From here came the means with which failure, displacement, encounters, and feeling-out – or re-imaginings, as Ching would say – were socially negotiated.

4.2.6. C&G Artpartment

The artists who run C&G Artpartment are Clara Cheung Ka-Lei and Gum Cheng Yee-Man who are partners both in work and life. They set up C&G

Artpartment in 2007 and have been running the space since then. They were also involved with Wooferten in its first two years from 2009 to 2011. Located on the third floor of a residential building in the busy Mong Kok district, C&G is found in amongst an assortment of businesses including a hair salon and a small hotel that "was a bridal shop" just a year before. Theirs is a compact, open-plan flat conversion divided into two halves: there is a painting studio on one end, where the artists offer classes to financially support the curatorial, project-based work they present in the other, emptier half of the space. They are deliberately self-funded in order to maintain artistic and organisational independence.

Clara Cheung's words:

When we started, we felt that there were very few artists working in contemporary art who responded to politics and society. But pre-1997, there was a lot of politically engaged artistic content. For ten years after the handover, things got disquietingly still; the social climate itself was also still, which was part of the issue. The first exhibition we staged at C&G was called *Gei boon wui gwai* (2007; basic handover), in which we asked artists to respond to the Basic Law consultations.[7] The exhibition themes turned into a platform for artists to respond to current affairs and events. We felt that there was a real lack at the time. It was around the year 2000 when (curator and critic) Johnson Chang noted how Hong Kong artists tended towards more private, material concerns than anything, suggesting that there was a distance between artists and society. Their perspectives were socially

[7] The Basic Law was drafted between China and Hong Kong as a means of guaranteeing the city some form of legal autonomy in line with Deng Xiaoping's "one country, two systems" formulation.

removed.

Repeating shows and projects is quite beneficial to us, to our curatorial practice, and to the artists. In our second year, we did a project called *Sick Leave* (2008), which responded to the labour conditions in Hong Kong. "You can sooner die than you can be sick": we hear that all the time here. So why don't we all take sick leave together? Word got out to a much larger public than we are typically used to, possibly because everyone was having such a hard time at work. The title of the project really clicked, really resonated. Last year (2013), another organisation that we didn't know posted that "today is international sick leave day". The idea has been digested and reinterpreted into new concepts, but this couldn't have happened if we had only put the idea into practice once.

Gum Cheng's words:

The atmosphere is around us already. It's not so much about us "entering" [public space]. When and how do we actually enter the social or political arena? We wanted a place to get on with our artistic practice, and within this time and place, this atmosphere, we create something that we hope will lead to other things. […] We are currently in a moment of political co-thriving, but we haven't yet reached its pinnacle. I think when we do get to that point, some of us will have left this kind of work while others will have refined their practice. At the moment, things are rather dispersed. We have a common goal but different methods. Years ago when we took our wedding

engagement to the July 1st demonstration,[8] we were doing it alone. There was no talk of going as part of the "arts and cultural sector".

C&G started off with very few programmes. We had two main strands: our practice and painting lessons. You can tell that we don't have much space for exhibiting. We found ourselves a place that is accessible because we wanted people to come. But over time, you start to see that *kai fong* (neighbours) don't come much, which really was not how we imagined it. Our position started to shift and we now do more projects that concern artists specifically, more so than they would the general viewer. How might you "engage" with the public? You'd be better off doing some kind of direct action on Sai Yeung Choi Street. You can't do projects to "engage" viewers who you hope will later also "engage" with others on a given topic. You can't. Our environment and our space don't allow it.

Buried in the crowded shopping and residential district of Mong Kok, C&G Artpartment is located amongst a range of retail enterprises and flats in a residential building partly reappropriated for commercial use in its lower floors. They have an open-plan space that is split down the middle for exhibition use on the one side and painting classes on the other. Like most places in Hong Kong, it is tiny and wedged between multiple lives and

[8] A demonstration takes place annually on July 1st, the date that Hong Kong was handed over back to China. The concerns taken to the streets grow year by year, but still primarily target the lack of universal suffrage in the city. Dressed in traditional wedding costume, Cheung and Cheng performed their engagement during the 2004 demonstration.

businesses going on around you. Indeed, what Gum Cheng says about art not "entering" the social sphere as much as already being part of it makes a lot of sense when considered in this context; how can one *not* be "socially engaged" when the social is always present, felt, and heard?

In fact, their space emerged in the mid-2000s just as public outcry intensified against the destruction and redevelopment of historically significant sites around the city. While C&G had hoped for "people" – i.e. non-artist neighbours, passers-by, etc. – to become involved, they were unable to generate any significant local interest. What their space did offer was a pedagogical base for cultural and art workers to explore political issues. This was a function that came about through a gradual process of feeling and testing out an "atmosphere" that, as Gum Cheng notes, cannot be "entered" when we are "already" within it. This is echoed in Luke Ching Chin-Wai's "messing of borders" in the previous interview, which similarly feels and tests out social existence for alternative modes of living. In both, there is a sensitivity to the limitations of pre-defined relations, which in the case of C&G means recognising that the proximity of neighbours does not automatically provide the terms for "engagement".

Yet the failure of meeting expectations also brought about the search for different relational possibilities, something the artists have achieved through a process of experimentation that continues today. This can be seen in the breadth of their practice; a self-funded space, C&G teach painting classes to cover rent, their labour, and the projects they run within it. They put together

exhibitions, talks, art quizzes, and organise spontaneous public actions (artistic and otherwise) on Facebook. Their most prominent event is *Sick Leave* (since 2008), which invites anyone, anywhere in the world to call in sick on May 13 every year and do something for themselves.[9] For both artists, the immediacy of their work is most important, i.e. the ability to act and respond to current affairs as and when they wish. Their primary aim is to mobilise beside what is happening currently, as soon as possible. As Cheung says, "we seem to be firefighting everywhere and there just isn't enough time".

The priority of their practice, then, is to constantly negotiate the social, to shift with the "atmosphere" that they are "already" part of. This challenged my research at the time because of the range, the changeability, and the seeming absence of locational focus. Like both artists, I wanted to zoom away from the limitations of definition – in this study's context, it has meant artistic collaboration and transformation – to tackle the experience of social "engagement". To do so, the first cue into understanding C&G's specific relational material was found in Karen Barad's material-discursivity, which instates a making of agency in the intra-active spaces of the performatively engendered between (see: 1.1.4.). She argues that phenomena is where mattering takes place, where differentiation between bodies, spaces, and "apparatus" are produced. Instead of supposing any pre-existing agency a body possesses to "enter" an "atmosphere", per Cheng, or even for two

[9] A version of this idea has since shown up in the UK: German artist Maria Eichhorn's 2016 project at Chisenhale Gallery in London requested that staff "withdraw their labour" for five weeks in order to re-evaluate time.

bodies to meet / collide, she denotes a field of potentialities that take on more individual-like characteristics by way of material-discursive practices:

> The relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither discursive practices nor material phenomena are ontologically or epistemologically prior. Neither can be explained in terms of the other. Neither is reducible to the other. Neither has privileged status in determining the other. Neither is articulated or articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated. (Barad, 2007, p.152)

From a "being-*in*-the-world" to a "being-*of*-the-world" (ibid., p.160, my emphases), Barad presents from her critical perspective of science studies that phenomena and the apparatuses developed to observe them are co-constitutive of one another, since they are "parts of the world's ongoing reconfiguring" (ibid., p.184). While her formulation questions bodily and conceptual boundaries that ontologically and epistemologically centre the "human", I would like to hold onto this material-discursivity in a more particular way. In seeing how C&G operate, they value most of all the ability to mobilise in accordance to social and political urgencies, because it allows the artists to take part in the meaning-making (e.g. concerns, strategies, and reflexivity) specific to an emergent movement. This immersive embodiment reconstitutes a practice that is fully socially negotiated, i.e. it produces newness and boundaries from intra-related phenomena. These are what she calls "iterative becoming of spacetimemattering", which "reworks the entire

set of possibilities made available" (ibid., p.234).

What Clara Cheung and Gum Cheng attempt is precisely an emergent approach that only come to matter as well as significance in their doing. Barad's analysis has now enabled a rethinking of the lived – indeed, living – practices that make up the varied, disparate projects at C&G Artpartment, with her representation of material performativity being particularly relevant. As with the agential cuts in Barad's phenomena, the between does not pre-exist as a space to be "entered", but is instead relationally remade by human bodies and other nonhuman ones. This gives some shape to Gum Cheng's notion of being "already" in the grips of an atmosphere. As such, the negotiating middle can be reconfigured into an "epistemological-ontological-ethical" site (Barad, 2007, p.26) that is charged with ambiguous potentials. No longer, then, do we have to think of art practices working *upon* a socio-political reality, but examine the mutual, intra-active implication of phenomena that bring about different meanings and realities.

4.3. Reflecting on the frictive practice of research

The title of the final section demonstrates the desire to highlight the most pertinent effects from the interviews and observations on practice: the acknowledgement of frictive contact and how to make sense of it. At the end of the fieldwork, the gap between the theorising and making of art became almost too wide to bridge; the concepts available to me were either too

distant or too polished when placed beside the practices they supposedly articulate. The "aboutness" of the initial research question made it impossible to confront the subjective doubts within a critical process; they would have had to be buried away as personal responsibility in order for the original work to be carried out. What was necessary was a means to incorporate the two. This meant shifting the focus from "transformation" to "negotiation", which also enables the study to include practices that are normally seen as too instrumentalised for theoretical analysis.

The interviews and art processes in this chapter would have made up the core of my original study, but instead ended up inciting a change of subject as well as research perspective. This was demanding on many levels, not least of which was the need to develop a new language that is capable of grappling with these experiences. The research trip has become a point around which the rest of the study grew, demonstrating just how "saturated" the fieldwork's "temporality" has been (see: choreographic time 3.2.1.). Especially apparent now is how the exploration of such situated practices is fraught with difficulties, and cannot be done without some consideration of one's positioning in the process (see: 1.1.3.).

As such, this final chapter attempts to describe the raw relational material that engendered this study and to see how the disparate pieces of its assemblage are related to the fieldwork. In establishing a methodological insistence on being beside, the time in Hong Kong took on a different life, from a critically distanced proposition of evaluating transformation to a

critically proximal one that asks: what does it mean to live, practice, and reflect beside one another? What sort of perspectival shifts does such an embodied relationality throw up? How is the social reconfigured? Where does that leave us in terms of socially situated concepts whose good intentions are taken for granted: dialogue, love, even "socially engaged"?

Through the defamiliarising experience of practice, it was necessary to develop a different account for an embodied criticality that ultimately offers material presence, emotional rigour, and an attunement to the negotiation of intimacy and livability. Yet the self-reflexivity I have engaged with over the course of the study articulates only some of the problem-sites; there are more that continue to unfold even at this late juncture. Most notable is the opportunity to further investigate the vexed relation between a researcher's role with regards to politically situated practices presented here and postcoloniality, both in terms of Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997 and the nomadic tendencies of the art form. Indeed, such an examination would be resoundingly relevant as the international art scene shifts away from a North American and European focus towards the periphery in a conscious move to be globally representative. What does such a decentring involve and what are its limits? As this chapter has attempted to clear some space for artists and practices, it is still constrained by the structure of the research. In relation to the subaltern, Spivak reminds us how their "speaking" is always already imbued in failure if framed within the "firstworld" intellectual context: "The historian, transforming 'insurgency' into 'text for knowledge,' is only one 'receiver' of any collectively intended social act. […] *[T]he historian must*

suspend (as far as possible) the clamor of his or her own consciousness (or consciousness-effect, as operated by disciplinary training), so that the elaboration of the insurgency, packaged with an insurgent-consciousness, does not freeze into an 'object of investigation' or, worse yet, a model for imitation" (Spivak, 2003, p.28, my emphasis). In many ways, this study has precisely been about figuring out how to examine the intentions, desires, and connections that take place between bodies without smoothing over the textures and complexities of shared experiences. Even as the final chapter comes to a close, there are aspects of the relational material that continue to be re-negotiated. But the hope is that the resituating of praxis within emergent, self-reflexive practices can give life to the embodied criticality that has been so central to the study.

Conclusion

Having attempted to wrestle with the slippery relational material of socially negotiated art, the thesis has come to argue for a critical and capacious understanding of its textures and connections, of which there are: intimate publics, frictive modes of speech, body borders, to name a few. Its (affective, subjective, political) inconsistencies need to be better amplified in order to make a different sense of the practices that are taking place in lesser or greater proximity to the art world. Generated by embodied negotiations, the "social" part of my study is not captured but given the space to work out its own form: what we find is something emergent, produced through iterative "blind fumbling[s]" (Halberstam, 2011) of bodies and affect. The research leaves behind the definitions or muddlings of doing art or politics, jumping instead into the deep end of relations, their articulation, and their navigation. The affective forces that surround the process, taxing as they are to sustain, pervade throughout the study. To focus on embodiment through negotiation and queer disorientations was a large part of the task set at the end of chapter one, suggesting potential to invent and co-create. At that stage, it took on a more evidently productive and thriving energy. But as the fieldwork in chapter four also reminds us, this does not necessarily sustain through the process; the saturated temporality of living out the material present leaves you out of joint with time, demanding a different mode of unpacking. Such is the affective upshot of socially negotiated practices: it produces more questions than answers.

One of the most challenging aspect has been the navigation of self-reflexivity, which is something that is emphatically advocated throughout the study. With the research focusing on informal channels of knowledge as well as the value of failures and emotional blockages, the weight of the study ends up resting precisely on sites of criticality that are normally ruled out as irrelevant or counterproductive. This shifting tension between what to include and how to address situations normally relegated to the private domain were some of the most difficult yet elucidating decisions made in reorienting the social and the subjective, both of the thesis and the practices it seeks to understand.

This careful navigation of the personal comes as part of the socially negotiated labour that sustains the practice. From the slow building of trust with partners and collaborators to the maintenance of healthy institutional connections, the relational material is constantly under construction, though some areas tend to be given greater care while others are neglected. As much as possible, the study attends to these relational shifts, in particular those that are harder to bring to the fore. In using "beside" as a methodology, the frictive forms I have proposed throughout the study situate art practices as living endeavours in various relations to others, with the potential to create evaluative knowledges (see: 2.2.2. on gossip) and to offer critique on care (see: 3.3.1. and 3.3.2. on the extradomestic). Through theoretical analysis and a selection of art projects and interviews, I have attempted to shine a light on the relational material of socially negotiated art and, more precisely, on how an embodied criticality and self-reflexivity can

bring it into focus.

Indeed, the relational material intended to rework specific living situations is just as prone to stalling as it is to imagining better futures. That many projects have limited resources and time frames means that it is difficult to make good on what artists, commissioners, and collaborators envision. This particular significance of failure (see: 1.1.5. on not renouncing failures and the past) applies from one socially negotiated context to the next, a fact that is taking on a greater significance at the conclusion of the study. In reflection, the phrase that echoes the most is Hannah Nicklin's final evaluation of her project *Teviot Tales* (2014) (see: 3.3.2.): "I don't know if it was successful".

Moving until you stand still

Ambivalence was not a part of the plan at the outset. Rather, it was driven by a more straightforward curiosity to have a better scope of what constitutes socially "engaged" art as a field, its different desires and alignments with socio-political transformation. This stemmed from the need to take part in a different form of labour, something more steady and reparative than the precarity of producing independent art projects. Led by the hopeful conviction that the reflection of writing would bring about a (re)turn of perspective, the study was formatively shaped by the surge of activist energy in Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970), a heavily cited and relevant text for many practitioners in this field. As I have variously argued throughout the

study, his pedagogy is driven by active *mediation*, which immediately hits home for art workers interested in the active *mediation* of social relations. This concern of what happens in the middle – "to mediate" is etymologically "to be placed in the middle" after all – is part of a Freirean "humanisation" that falls in line with the Latin-American liberation theology of the time (see: 3.1.1.). Against the colonial oppression that negates such an anthropological "vocation", the oppressed will join the struggle "sooner or later" (Freire, 1970, p.44). This involves a consciousness-raising pedagogy that gives them the power to emancipate themselves as well as their oppressors, and to "restor[e] the humanity of both" (ibid.). Weaving through his praxis of activism, philosophy, and education, then, is the *mobilisation* that is up for the task on the one hand, which counteracts the *immobilisation* of a "fatalist" outlook (Freire, 1970) on the other.

Despite the intention to critique Freirean concepts of dialogue, love, and praxis within the proposed context of socially *negotiated* art, the queer and feminist interventions were still largely yoked to an anticipatory hope that is similarly found in his pedagogy. The ambition can be found chiefly in the overall methodological aim (see: 1.2.2.) to be "beside" – to partake of research in the middle, to mediate. However, against the grain of Freire's "humanisation" and its assumption of horizontality, I looked at differentiation and the uneven relations that exist between bodies: the coming-together he proposes through a dialogically oriented pedagogy has been questioned in the many facets of the relational material presented in chapters two, three, and four. While chapter one initially prepared for a forward thrust towards queer

and feminist embodiments, the deeper considerations of friction and impasses proved to tell equally critical stories of staying put and what it can also achieve. In particular, the revisiting of the fieldwork interviews in chapter four enabled a situated application of the concepts presented throughout the study.

Another aspect that the research sought to confront was the lingering desire to prove and propel change in the relational in-between. Specifically, after the value of dissenting communication was presented in chapter two, the frictive took on an important dimension that was carried over to chapter three's refractions on love. There, I attempted to insert a similar kind of intervention, which would unpack Freirean revolutionary love and its correlation with hope. Friction is meant to slow things down by definition, which transforms the effusiveness of love into something weightier and more peculiar: optimism can feel like broken loops and impasses (see: 3.1.2.) while care, usurped into affective labour, can also make a critical return through the extradomestic (see: 3.3.). The explorations of intimacy, body borders, and care in chapter three articulated some extremely significant considerations for the relational material of socially negotiated art. Love, as examined here, is both open and rigorous enough to recognise impasses on the one hand and to set boundaries on the other, thus (re-)shaping bodies and situations by staying put rather than mobilising. This particular disorientation of my original "transformation" focus – the halting, the stillness – made its impression on the research trajectory gently yet steadily, and is now its most important takeaway. The thesis has thus carefully considered that sense of displacement

found both in the research as well as practice of socially negotiated art. While chapter one concluded with a queer vision of socially negotiated practices that would be fit enough to tackle the pleasure, pain, discomfort, etc. of the relational material, the affective repercussions of chapters two, three, and four demanded a slowing down that would become a critical part of being "beside" in this study.

As such, it is now ending at a point that befits a conclusion: the best relational intentions of socially negotiated art practices will still come into contact with friction and lose momentum. At times, this might generate a different energy altogether, one that is based on disagreement and disorientation. The hampering that is such a significant part of negotiation can potentially bring us to an affective tension – which includes the art worker's tedium described earlier – that could do with its own consciousness-raising. Despite being labelled "fatalistic" in the Freirean sense, "immobility" comes in many forms, from standing still to being backed into a corner; from feeling emotionally depleted to treading water. That these occur in the very same socially produced space suggests the need to pay closer attention to the knowledge they carry.

Weighty affects and the potential of hampering

I would like to lead out of this study with some thoughts and speculations on a middling "beside" that feels like pushback, making limps out of galloping

desires. Meniality, as discussed in terms of their extradomestic reclamation in 3.3., is one way in which the so-called limps can be critiqued in relation to social care and art's role within it. In cases where the relation between the latter two is clear and explicit, the pushback can appear in a number of ways: project goals too large for the structural and critical support available; stressful emotional labour; frequent bouts of starting and ending to projects and the adjustments that is required at each turn; inconsistent work load; relatively small fees; and working time seeping into personal time. With regards to the artists specifically, a significant part of the task has to do with care – often where there is none otherwise (see: 3.3.2. on menial labour and the bare work of care) – which means coping with the affective repercussions that come with it. Indeed, the work of socially negotiated art amounts to affective inflation and deflation, beginning with the optimistic promises of funding proposals, the making and sustaining of precarious relations, and the presenting of an effective conclusion, all of which comes at a great emotional and physical expense. What interests me, should this research find the chance to refine and further itself, is drawing more significant connections between socially negotiated art and systems of support; between the maintenance of a hidden affective economies and the aims purported in official narratives (of social care, political change, cultural sensitivity, respect of difference, etc.).

Why look at infrastructures of complex feelings when you could spend that same energy to "progress"? The answer has to do with sitting differently with the past, bringing it into a present, self-reflexive "disruption of politics as

usual" (Cvetkovich, 2012, p.117). Here, the queer tempo of the now (see: 3.2.2. on choreography of assembly) makes another return: as everything else seems to pace on, your disorientation locks into a different time and place. The attention to frictive feelings is therefore aligned with research that draws upon negative or disquieting affects, which have turned out to be this study's background atmosphere. For Heather Love, whose pathbreaking work in "Feeling Backward" (2007) explores turning back in the broadest sense (staying with the past, failing to align, sense of loss, etc. in relation to queer sexualities), "structures of feeling [are] crucial to queer studies where the analysis of uncodified subjective experiences is an important supplement to the study of the history of formal laws, practices, and ideologies. The saturation of experience with ideology is particularly important to queer critics because homophobia and heterosexism *inflect everyday life in ways that can be difficult to name*" (Love, 2007, p.12, my emphasis).

The significance of everyday "inflections" is also an apt way to think about the different social scenes described in this study. It is possible, in fact, to consider how inflections have affectively transitioned throughout the research: in chapter one, the scene-setting is counterpublic and more eager; in chapter two, the refraction of dialogue leads towards dissensus and friction; in chapter three, love reincorporates impasses and body borders; and in chapter four, aspects of all three collide and converge, like Love's "backwardness", to the severe displacement experienced during fieldwork. By the end of the study, the most resonant inflection is the value of friction and hampering, which I hope to continue examining. While impasses and their

associated challenges may leave us "unfit for the redress of grievance" (ibid.), they are nonetheless incisive, daring us to go public with these feelings that hearkens to Cvetkovich's careful unravelling of depression's social dimension (2012). The analysis of the "relational material" has crept into the affective in ways that both exceed and reinforce its artistic potential. What is cohering here at the conclusion is how the critical modalities explored – through failure, friction, impasses, etc. – demonstrate the impossibility of pre-positioning or directly implementing artistic or social intentions. While these motivations are bound for frictive contact, the renegotiation of borders also produce their own disoriented perspectives that are able to reparatively and self-reflexively critique the practices that engendered them.

Towards a queerly oriented socially negotiated art

The relational material emerged from the gradual crafting of a softer, queerer analytical touch that is methodologically developed "beside" the mandate for change. In doing so, this study has tilted the view of socially "engaged" art; the examination of its generative, relational stakes produces, in turn, other frameworks of understanding that question artistic, social, and pedagogical systems of evaluation. By insisting on the queerness of negotiation, the constructive desires and qualities of art practices are given a different dimension, e.g. empathy becomes complicit (see: 1.1.3. on dialogical art) while care becomes as a form of labour (see: 3.3.2. on meniality). As a term, "socially engaged" is likely to reinforce the comfortable ideal of art in extra-

artistic situations and/or conciliatory artmaking. Not only does this underestimate the mechanisms that must be in place in order for disparate contexts to merge in the first place, but it also turns the encounter into the ground zero for ensuing social *engagement*. In the end, what social *negotiation* refracts is this moment of supposed coming-together; it reinstates the agency of the in-between by highlighting the many points of orientation, the different bodies, and the connections between them, from artist to participant, place to institution. This would require a different understanding of where a work begins or ends, as the social is no longer taken to be that event of convergence.

By introducing the methodological notion of "beside", I was able to anchor my research within the embodied conditions of sociality in order to question what happens and how. The parameters of dialogue, love, and praxis borrowed from Freire's pedagogy offered a place from which to think about the social as collective transformation and "worldmaking". This prepared them as sites for refractive analysis, leading to the following key ideas: that frictive speech forms like gossip and teasing present a challenge to the inclusive accessibility of dialogue by articulating counterpublic intimacies (chapter two); that the affects of political love exceed the urge to "mobilise" and is apt to getting stuck, to border-making, and to performing (menial) acts of care (chapter three); and finally, that a situatedness must be equally attentive to the frictions and impasses that are generated in the same social space as the progressive drive for praxis (chapter four).

Rather than forge ahead with the transformative potential of socially engaged art, I chose to stay put with the ambivalence and frustrations that are so rarely theorised in this field and re-centred them through embodiment and affect. Hence the "relational material" of this study; it is the feeling-out of the space between things, including above all textures of discomfort and the potential it holds. Indeed, constituting the relational material of socially negotiated art has meant travelling a convoluted route. At the start, it bore the hope of becoming a queer and feminist resistance that was nonetheless proportionately inverse to socially and politically engaged art: the relational material would possess the same counterpublic indignation that insists upon the rewards of an ambivalent yet always productive third space. But this project came to a difficult middle point when the constituent parts of art's social desire were more closely scrutinised: disorientation led to impasses, dissent to the impossibility of full inclusion, and intimate publics never get their act together, amongst other reticences. In other words, the study's intervention of refusal also refused to be wrangled into correlative, well-meaning change. Queer and feminist indeed, which now seems plainly obvious when taking "beside" seriously as methodology and as embodied experience.

In the end, there is no making sense out of something as inconsistent as the relational material, for it can never be claimed for specific uses, constructive or otherwise. Following Heather Love, backwardness remembers in other ways, which is especially critical when sentimentality is so often exploited by power structures. In the end, it has proven to be more fruitful to confront this

struggle with friction and hampering, both of which are underappreciated aspects of social desire; a queer and feminist relational material must recentre the chronic displacement that enunciates it. Not only does this mean the sharing of failures and impasses, but also the honing of a self-reflexivity in the theorisation as well as practice of socially negotiated art.

Bibliography

Adkins, K.C. (2017) Gossip, Epistemology, and Power: Knowledge Underground. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Adkins, K.C. (2002) The real dirt: Gossip and feminist epistemology. *Social Epistemology*. **16**(3), pp.215-232.

Agamben, G. (1998) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life.* (Translated by D. Heller-Roazen). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Ahmed, S. (2006) Orientations: Towards a Queer Phenomenology. *A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*. **12**(4), pp.543-574.

Ahmed, S. (2004) *The Cultural Politics of Emotion.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.

Anderson, B. (2006) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised edition, London, New York: Verso.

Art Discover. Exhibitions 2012/13. *Annette Krauss* [online]. [Accessed 2 March 2015]. Available at: <http://www.artdiscover.com/en/exhibitions/2012-13-annette-krauss-id802>.

Arvatov, B. (2017) *Art and Production.* (Edited by J. Roberts and A. Penzin). London, New York: Pluto Press.

Atlas Group. (2000) The Bachar Tapes. *The Atlas Group Archive* [online]. [Accessed 6 May 2016]. Available at: <http://www.theatlasgroup.org/data/TypeA.html>.

Axelos, K. (1976) *Alienation, Praxis, and Technē in the Thought of Karl Marx*. (Translated by R. Bruzina). Austin, London: University of Texas Press.

Badiou, A. (2010) *The Communist Hypothesis*. (Translated by D. Macey and S. Corcoran). London, New York: Verso.

Badiou, A. (2012) *In Praise of Love* (With N. Truong. Translated by P. Bush). London: Serpents Tail.

Bakare-Yusuf, B. (1999) The Economy of Violence: Black Bodies and the Unspeakable Terror. *in* Price, J. and Shildrick, M. (eds.) *Feminist Theory and The Body*. New York: Routledge, pp.311-323.

Bakhtin, M. (1975) *The Dialogic Imagination.* (Translated by C. Emerson and M. Holquist). Reprint, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

Balibar, E. (2007) *The Philosophy of Marx.* (Translated by C. Turner). London, New York: Verso.

Barad, K. (2003) Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. **28**(3), pp.801-831.

Barad, K. (2007) *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Barad, K. (2012) Nature's Queer Performativity. *Qui Parle*. **19**(2), pp.121-158.

Barad, K. and Kleinman, A. (2012) Karen Barad: Intra-Actions. *Mousse* **34** (summer), pp.76-81.

Bauman, Z. (2000) *Liquid Modernity*. Reprint, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.

Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R. and Tarule, J.M. (1986) *Women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Basic Books.

Bell Yank, S. (2013) *2Up 2Down/Homebaked and the Symbolic Media Narrative* [online]. [Accessed 2 April 2015]. Available at: <http://www.biennial.com/journal/issue-2/test>.

Berlant, L. (2008) *The Female Complaint*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Berlant, L. (2011a) *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Berlant, L. (2011b) A Properly Political Concept of Love: Three Approaches in Ten Pages. *Cultural Anthropology*. **26**(4), pp.683-691.

Berardi, F. (2009) *The Soul At Work: From Alienation to Autonomy*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

Berry Slater, J. (2012) *The Ghosts of Participation Past* [online]. Mute Magazine. [Accessed 13 October 2012]. Available at: <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/ghosts-participation-past>.

Bhabha, H. (1994) *The Location of Culture*. Reprint, London, New York: Routledge, 2004.

Billig, M. (1995) *Banal Nationalism*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship.* London, New York: Verso.

Bishop, C. (ed.) (2006a) *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art.* London, Cambridge: Whitechapel and MIT Press.

Bishop, C. (2006b) The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents. *Artforum*, **44**(6), pp.178–183.

Black, H. (2017) Witch-hunt. *TANK*. **8**(11), pp. 106-111.

Blackman, L. (2001) *Hearing Voices: Embodiment and Experience*. London: Free Association Press.

Bloch, E. (1986) *The Principle of Hope, Volume 1*. (Translated by N. Plaice, S. Plaice and P. Knight). Third printing, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996.

Bourriaud, N. (1998) *Relational Aesthetics.* (Translated by S. Pleasance and F. Woods). Reprint, Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2000.

Braden, S. (1978) *Artists and people*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Braidotti, R. (2006) Affirmation versus Vulnerability: On Contemporary Ethical Debates. *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy*. **10**(1), pp. 235–254.

Breuer, J and Freud, S. (1895) *Studies on Hysteria*. (Translated by J. Strachey). Reprint, New York: Basic Books Inc.

Brinkmann, S. (2015) Interviewing and the Production of the Conversational Self. in Denzin, N.K. and Giardina, M.D. Qualitative Inquiry: Past, Present and Future: A Critical Reader. London, New York: Routledge.

Brown, W. (2010) *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty.* New York: Zone Books.

Burbules, N. (2006) Rethinking Dialogue in Networked Spaces. *Critical Methodologies,* **6**(1), pp.107-122.

Burbules, N. and Bruce, B.C. (2001) *Theory and Research on Teaching as Dialogue* [online]. [Accessed 30 August 2013]. Available at: <http://faculty.education.illinois.edu/burbules/papers/dialogue.html>.

Butler, J. (1997) *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. New York, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1999) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (2000) *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life & Death*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Butler, J. (2002) Is Kinship Always Already Heterosexual? *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*. **13**(1), pp.13-44.

Butler, J. (2004) Variations on Sex and Gender: Beauvoir, Wittig, Foucault. *in* Salih, S. (ed.) *The Judith Butler Reader.* [ePub]. Malden, Oxford: Blackwell.

Butler, J. and Athanasiou, A. (2013) *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Butler, J. (2015) *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly.* Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press.

Campement Urbain (2008) *Conversations: Campement Urbain*. [online]. [Accessed 8 February 2016]. Available at: <http://www.networkedcultures.org/index.php?tdid=64>

Ciuraru, C. (2011) *Nom de Plume: A (Secret) History of Pseudonyms.* [Kindle Fire e-book]. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc.

Chto Delat? (2004) *Love and Politics* [online]. [Accessed 30 November 2013]. Available at: <http://chtodelat.org/category/b8-newspapers/12-70/>.

Cleto, F. (1999) Introduction: Queering the Camp. *in* Cleto, F. (ed.) *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject: A Reader.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp.1-42.

Crenshaw, K. (1991) Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review.* 43(6), pp.1241-1299.

Critical Art Ensemble (1998) *Observations on Collective Cultural Action* [online]. [Accessed 12 November 2013]. Available at: <http://www.critical-art.net/books/digital/tact4.pdf>.

Cvetkovich, A. (2012) *Depression: A Public Feeling*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Darder, A. (2017) *Reinventing Paulo Freire: A Pedagogy of Love*. 2nd ed. New York, London: Routledge.

Davis, H. and Sarlin, P. (2011) "*On the Risk of a New Relationality:" An Interview with Lauren Berlant and Michael Hardt* [online]. [Accessed 7 September 2017]. Available at: <http://reviewsinculture.com/2012/10/15/on-the-risk-of-a-new-relationality-an-interview-with-lauren-berlant-and-michael-hardt/>.

Dean, J. (2012) *The Communist Horizon*. London, New York: Verso.

Denzin, N.K. (2003) Performing [Auto] Ethnography Politically. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*. **25**, pp.257-278.

Dinshaw, C. (2012) *How Soon Is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Doherty, C. (2014) *New Rules for Public Art*. 11 June, KORO Public Art Norway, Oslo.

Dommu, R. (2018) *Anti-Trans Protestors Invade London Pride Parade & Are Allowed to Lead* [online]. [Accessed 12 July 2018]. Available at: < https://www.out.com/news-opinion/2018/7/07/anti-trans-protestors-invade-london-pride-parade-are-allowed-lead>.

Druiff, E. and Hope, S. (2015) *Social Art Map* [online]. [Accessed 9 August 2017]. Available at: <http://www.peckhamplatform.com/system/files/102015/562f80cb7d63685255000087/original/social_art_map_A1_sign_off.pdf?1445953739>.

Ellis, C., Adams, T.E., Bochner, A.P. (2011) Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research.* **36**(4), pp.273-290

Eng, D. (2010) *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Eng, D., Halberstam, J. and Muñoz, J.E. (2005) Introduction: What's Queer about Queer Studies now? *Social Text*. **23**(3-4), pp.1-17.

Federici, S. (2012) *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. Oakland: PM Press.

Feenberg, A. (2014) *The Philosophy of Praxis: Marx, Lukács, and the Frankfurt School.* London, New York: Verso.

Feil, K. (2005) Queer Comedy. *in* Charney, M. (ed.) *Comedy: A Geographic and Historical Guide, Volume 2.* Westport, London: Praeger Publishers, pp.477-492)

Foster, H. (1996) *The Return of the Real: Art and Theory at the End of the Century: Avant-garde at the End of the Century.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Foucault, M. (1978) *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction.* (Translated by R. Hurley). New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1984) Nietzsche, Genealogy, History. *in* Rabinow, P. (ed.) *The Foucault Reader.* New York: Pantheon Books, pp.76-100.

Franceschini, S. (ed.) *The Politics of Affinity: Experiments in Art, Education and the Social Sphere*. Biella: Cittadellarte Edizioni.

Freeman, E. (2007) Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion. *GLQ*, 13(2-3), pp.177-195.

Freeman, E. (2007) Queer Belongings: Kinship Theory and Queer Theory. *in* Haggerty, G.E. and McGarry, M. (eds.) *A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Studies.* Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, pp.295-314.

Freire, A.M.A and Macedo, D. (2000) (eds.) *The Paulo Freire Reader*. New York, London: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* (Translated by M. Bergman Ramos). Reprint, New York, London: Continuum, 2005.

Freire, P. (1997) *Pedagogy of the Heart.* (Translated by D. Macedo and A. Oliveira). Reprint, New York, London: Continuum, 2007.

Freire, P. (2004) *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* (Translated by R. R. Barr). Reprint, New York, London: Continuum, 2012.

Fusi, L. (2012) 'Disappearing human beings, not problems' *in* Tallant, S. and Domela, P. (eds.) *The Unexpected Guest: Art, writing, and thinking on hospitality*. London: Art Books Publishing Ltd., pp.10-15.

Gattinger, M. (2011) Democratization of Culture, Cultural Democracy and Governance. *Future Directions in Public Arts Funding: What Are The Shifts Required?*. Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) Annual General Meeting, 16-18 November 2011. Whitehorse: CPAF [Accessed 10 June 2013]. Available at: <http://www.cpaf-opsac.org/en/themes/documents/CPAF_2011_AGM_Democratization_of_Culture_Cultural_Democracy_Governance_Mar082012_000.pdf>.

Gerbaudo, P. (2012) *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism*. London, New York: Pluto Press.

Gielen, P. (2009) The Biennial: A Post-Institution for Immaterial Labour. *open: Cahier on Art and the Public Domain,* no.16, pp.8-17.

Giroux, H.A. (1992) Paulo Freire and the Politics of Postcolonialism. *Journal of Advanced Composition*, **12**(1), pp.15-26.

Giroux, H.A. (2013) Prologue: The Fruit of Freire's Roots. *in* Lake, R. and Kress, T. (eds.) *Paulo Freire's Intellectual Roots*. New York, London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp.ix-xxi.

Glass, R.D. (2001) On Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Praxis and the Foundations of Liberation Education. *Educational Researcher*, **30**(2), pp.15-25.

Grizedale Arts. (2015) *What we do*. [online]. [Accessed 2 April 2015]. Available at: <http://www.grizedale.org/about/>.

Grosz, E. (2001) *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space.* Cambridge, London: MIT Press.

Habermas. J. (1994) *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics*. Reprint, Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 2001.

Halberstam, J. (2011) *The Queer Art of Failure*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Haraway, D.J. (2008) *When Species Meet.* Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press.

Hardt, M. (1999) Affective Labor. *boundary 2*. **26**(2), pp.89-100.

Hardt, M. (2011a) *For Love or Money*. [online]. [Accessed 19 February 2016]. Available at: <https://youtu.be/swMwDa_0Pc0/>.

Hardt, M. (2011b) For Love or Money. *Cultural Anthropology*. **26**(4), pp.676-682.

Hardt, M. (2012) *The Procedures of Love*. 100 Notes – 100 Thoughts 68. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2009) *Commonwealth*. Cambridge: The Belknapp Press of the Harvard University Press.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2017) *Assembly*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Harney, S. and Moten, F. (2013) *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*. Wivenhoe, New York, Port Watson: Minor Compositions.

Hartman, S. (2017) The Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women's Labors. *in* Wilderson, F.W. (ed.) *Afro-Pessmism: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Racked & Dispatched, pp.80-90.

Harvie, J. (2013) *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism.* Houndmills, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Helguera, P. (2011) *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook.* New York: Jorge Pinto Books.

Hesse, B. (1996) White governmentality: Urbanism, nationalism, racism *in* Westwood, S. and Williams, J. (eds.) *Imagining Cities: Scripts, Signs and Memories*. London: Routledge, pp.85-102.

Hochschild, A.R. (2012) *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Reprint, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Holquist, M. (1990) *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*. Reprint, London, New York: Routledge, 1994.

Holquist, M. and Liapunov, V. (eds.) (1990) *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays by M. M. Bakhtin.* (Translated by V. Liapunov.) Austin: University of Texas Press.

Hope, S. (2011) *Participating in the 'Wrong' Way?: Practice Based Research into Cultural Democracy and the Commissioning of Art to Effect Social Change.* Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, Birkbeck, University of London [online]. [Accessed 6 June 2013]. Available at:

<http://sophiehope.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SH_PhD_Final.pdf>.

hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York, London: Routledge.

Hui, Y. and DOXA Collective (eds.) (2014) *Creative Space: Art and Spatial Resistance in East Asia* (創意空間 - 東亞的藝術與空間抗爭). Hong Kong: Roundtable Synergy Books.

Hutchinson, M. (2009) *For the Avant-Garde: Notes on Art, Capitalism & Revolution* [online]. [Accessed 23 September 2013]. Available at: <http://www.markhutchinson.org/writing/writing%20avantgarde.html>.

Irigaray, L. (1985) *This Sex Which Is Not One*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Irwin, J. (2012) *Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Education: Origins, Developments, Impacts and Legacies*. New York, London: Continuum.

Jackson, L.M. (2014) *On the use of memes as "digital blackface" performance and its specifically anti-black misogyny* [online]. [Accessed 29 June 2016]. Available at: <https://www.theawl.com/2014/08/memes-and-misogynoir/>.

Jackson, S. (2011) *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics.* New York: Routledge.

Jeeves, T. (2013) *Performance, participation and questions of ownership in the Anfield Home Tour* [online]. [Accessed 2 April 2015]. Available at: <http://www.biennial.com/journal/issue-2/performance-participation-and-questions-of-ownership-in-the-anfield-home-tour>.

Johnson, E.P. (2003) SNAP! Culture: a different kind of reading. *in* Auslander, P. (ed.) *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies, Vol. III*. New York: Routledge, pp.173-198.

Jones, A. (2004) Talking Cure: The Desire for Dialogue. *in* Boler, M. (ed.) *Democratic Dialogue in Education: Troubling Speech, Disturbing Silence*. New York: Peter Lang.

Joy, J. (2014) *The Choreographic*. Cambridge, London: MIT Press.

Kelly, O. (1984) *Community, Art and the State: Storming the Citadels*. London: Comedia Publishing Group.

Keltner, D., Capps, L., Kring, A.M., Young, R.C. and Heerey, E.A. (2001) Just Teasing: A Conceptual Analysis and Empirical Review. *Psychological Bulletin*. **127**(2), pp.229-248.

Kester, G. (2011) *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context.* Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Kester, G. (2004) *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Klaman. G. (2012) *A Subjective Bus Line*. [online]. [Accessed 5 April 2015]. Available at: <http://www.flacc.info/en/projecten/2012/159>.

Kluitenberg, E. (2015) *Affect Space: Witnessing the Movement(s) of the Squares.* [online]. [Accessed 7 September 2017]. Available at: <https://www.onlineopen.org/affect-space>.

Konstan, D. (2018) *In the Orbit of Love: Affection in Ancient Greece and Rome*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Krauss, A., Jickling, H. and Reed, H. (2013) *Documenting Secrets* [online]. [Accessed 5 March 2018]. Available at: <https://thepedagogicalimpulse.com/documenting-secrets/>.

Kvale, S. (2006) Dominance Through Interviews and Dialogues. *Qualitative Inquiry*. **12**(3), pp.480-500.

Kwon, M. (2002) *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity.* Reprint, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004.

Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics.* Reprint, London, New York: Verso, 2001.

Larsen, L.B. (2012) The Long Nineties. *Frieze Magazine*, (144), pp.92-5.

Latour, B. (2010) *Some Experiments on Art and Politics* [online]. [Accessed 26 August 2013]. Available at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/some-experiments-in-art-and-politics/>.

Lee, C.F. (ed.) (2014) *Wooferten's Art / Activist in Residence (AAIR)*. Hong Kong: Wooferten and Colham Printing.

Léger, M.J. (2012) *Brave New Avant Garde: Essays on Contemporary Art and Politics*. Alresford: Zero Books.

Levinas, E. (1991) *Otherwise than Being.* (Translated by A. Lingis). Reprint, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994.

Li, H.L. (2004) Rethinking Silencing Silences. *in* Boler, M. (ed.) *Democratic Dialogue in Education: Troubling Speech, Disturbing Silence*. New York: Peter Lang.

Liepe-Levinson, K. (1998) Striptease: Desire, Mimetic Jeopardy and Performing Spectators. *The Drama Review*. **42**(2), pp.9-37.

Lorde, A. (1984) *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Trumansburg: Crossing Press.

Love, H. (2007) *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press.

Lucchetti, M. (2015) *Introducing the Visible Awards*. 31 October, Council Chamber of Liverpool Town Hall, Liverpool.

Lugones, M.C. and Spelman, E.V. (1983) Have We Got A Theory For You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and the Demand for 'The Woman's Voice'. *Women's Studies International Forum*. **6**(6), pp.573-581.

Martin, S. (2007) Critique of Relational Aesthetics. *Third Text*. **21**(4), pp.369-386.

Massumi, B. (2002) *Parables for the Virtual*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Massumi, B. *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*. Cambridge, London: MIT Press.

Matarasso, F. (2013) *'All in this together': The depoliticisation of community art in Britain, 1970-2011* [online]. [Accessed 10 June 2013]. Available at: <http://parliamentofdreams.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/all-in-this-together-matarasso.pdf>.

McKee, Y. (2016) *Strike Art: Contemporary Art and the Post-Occupy Condition*. London, New York: Verso.

McLaren, P. (1992) Critical literacy and postcolonial praxis: A Freirian perspective. *College Literature*, **19**(3), pp.7-27.

McLaren, P. (2000) *Che Guevara, Paulo Freire, and the Pedagogy of Revolution*. Lanham, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Medina, C. and Fraga, C.M. (eds.) (2012) *The Deep of the Modern: A Subcyclopaedia*. Milan: Silvana Editoriale.

Merry, S.E. (1997) Rethinking Gossip and Scandal. *in* Klein, D.B. (ed.) *Reputation: Studies in the Voluntary Elicitation of Good Conduct*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp.47-74.

Miles, M. (2009) Aesthetics in a Time of Emergency. *Third Text*, **23**(4), pp.421-433.

Mitchell, D. (2013) *Taking Space* [online]. [Accessed 2 April 2015]. Available at: <http://www.biennial.com/journal/issue-2/taking-space>.

Moersch, C. (2011) *Alliances for Unlearning: On Gallery Education and Institutions of Critique* in *Afterall* [online]. [Accessed 10 March 2015]. Available at: <http://www.afterall.org/journal/issue.26/alliances-for-unlearning-on-the-possibility-of-future-collaborations-between-gallery-educa>.

Moersch, C. (2009) Gallery Education Informed by Queer, Feminist, Post-Colonial Thinking. *Art Institutions and the Feminist Dialectic Symposium.* Ontario Association of Art Galleries, February 2008. Toronto: Ontario Association of Art Galleries [Accessed 24 May 2013]. Available at: <http://feministdialectic.ca/transcripts/Carmenmoersch.pdf>.

Morris, G. and Giersdorf, R. (eds.) (2016) *Choreographies of 21st Century Wars*. New York: Oxford Unversity Press.

Mouffe, C. (2013) *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically.* London, New York: Verso.

Mouffe, C. (2007) Artistic Activism and Agonistic Spaces. *ART&RESEARCH: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods*. **1**(2), pp.1-5.

Negri, A. (2008) *Reflections on Empire*. (With contributions from M. Hardt and D. Zolo. Translated by E. Emery). Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press.

Nicklin, H. (2016) '*Artwashing'*. [online]. [Accessed 2 August 2017]. Available at: <http://poplarpeople.co.uk/artwashing>.

Nikolakaki, M. (ed.) (2012) *Critical Pedagogy in the New Dark Ages: Challenges and Possibilities*. New York: Peter Lang.

Nine Urban Biotopes. (2014) *Trialogue III* [online]. [Accessed 20 October 2014]. Available at: <http://www.urban-biotopes.net>.

O'Neill, P. and Wilson, M. (eds.) (2010) *Curating and the Educational Turn*. London, Amsterdam: Open Editions, De Appel.

Olson, G. A. (1992) History, Praxis, and Change: Paulo Freire and the Politics of Literacy. *Journal of Advanced Composition*. **12**(1), pp.1-14.

Penzin, A. (2010) The Soviets of the Multitude: On Collectivity and Collective Work. *Mediations*, **25**(1), pp. 81-92.

Pratt, L. (2011) Close Reading the Present: Eudora Welty's Queer Politics. *in* McCallum, E.L. and Tuhkanen, M. (eds.) *Queer Times, Queer Becomings*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Puar, J. (2005) Queer times, Queer assemblages. *Social Text*, **23**(3-4 84-85), pp.121-139.

Puar, J. (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Quaintance, M. (2012) *Claire Bishop: Artificial Hells Review* [online]. Morgan Quaintance website. [Accessed 20 April 2016]. Available at: <https://morganquaintance.com/2012/09/03/claire-bishop-artificial-hells/>.

Radical Culture Research Collective. (2007) *A Very Short Critique of Relational Aesthetics* [online]. TRANSFORM, European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies. [Accessed 14 February 2014]. Available at: <http://transform.eipcp.net/correspondence/1196340894>.

Rancière, J. (2011) The Thinking of Dissensus. *in* Bowman, P. and Stamp, R. (eds.) *Reading Rancière*. London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, pp.1-17.

Rancière, J. (2010) *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics.* (Translated by S. Corcoran). London, New York: Continuum.

Rancière, J. (2008) *Aesthetic Separation, Aesthetic Community: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art* [online]. [Accessed: 25 February 2015]. Available at: <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n1/ranciere.html>.

Rancière, J. (1995) *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*. (Translated by J. Rose). Reprint, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Raunig, G. (2007) *Art and Revolution*. (Translated by A. Derieg). Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

Reynolds, W.M. (2013) Liberation Theology and Paolo Freire: On the Side of the Poor. *in* Lake, R. and Kress, T. (eds.) *Paulo Freire's Intellectual Roots*. New York, London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp.127-144.

Riggs, M.T. (1991) Notes of a Signifyin' Snap! Queen. *Art Journal*, **50**(3), pp.60–64.

Riggs, M.T. (1992) Unleash the Queen. *in* Wallace, M. and Dent, G. (eds.) *Black Popular Culture*. Seattle: Bay Press, pp.99-105.

Roberts, J. (2015) *Revolutionary Time and the Avant-Garde*. London, New York: Verso.

Roberts, J. (2004) Collaboration as a Problem of Art's Cultural Form. *Third Text*, **18**(6), pp.557-564.

Rogoff, I. (2006) *Smuggling: An Embodied Criticality*. [online]. [Accessed 18 June 2013]. Available at: <http://eipcp.net/dlfiles/rogoff-smuggling>.

Rogoff, I. (2010) *FREE*. [online]. [Accessed 14 February 2013]. Available at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/free/>.

Rooke, A. (2012) *Modalities of Exchange.* [online]. [Accessed 4 August 2017]. Available at: < https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/departments/research-centres-and-units/research-centres/centre-for-urban-and-comm/modalities_inners_single_02-(2).pdf>.

Russo, M. (1999) *The reeducation of a queer theorist* [online]. Salon. [Accessed 3 March 2014]. Available at: <http://www.salon.com/1999/09/27/sedgwick/>.

Rutherford, J. (1990) The Third Space. Interview with Homi Bhabha. *in* Rutherford, J. (ed.) *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, pp.207-221.

Sandage, S.A. (2005) *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America*. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press.

Savransky, M. (2016) Modes of Mattering: Bard, Whitehead, and Societies. *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* [online]. [Accessed 1 May 2018]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20415/rhiz/030.e08>.

Schmitt, C. (2005) *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty.* (Translated by G. Schwab). Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press.

Schrag, A. (2015a) *Agonistic Tendencies: The role of conflict within institutionally supported participatory practices.* Doctorate of Philosophy Thesis, Newcastle University. Unpublished copy.

Schrag, A. (2015b) Appendices to *Agonistic Tendencies: The role of conflict within institutionally supported participatory practices*. Doctorate of Philosophy Thesis, Newcastle University. Unpublished copy.

Sedgwick, E.K. (2003) *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity.* Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Shildrick, M. (2002) *Embodying the Monster: Encounters with the Vulnerable Self*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Shildrick, M. (2009) *Dangerous Discourses of Disability, Subjectivity and Sexuality*. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Shildrick, M. (2015) "Why Should Our Bodies End at the Skin?": Embodiment, Boundaries, and Somatechnics. *Hypatia*, **30**(1), pp.13-29.

Sholette, G. (2011) *Dark Matter: Art and Politics in the Age of Enterprise Culture*. London, New York: Pluto Press.

Sholette, G., Bass, C. and Social Practice Queens (eds.) (2018) *Art as Social Action: An Introduction to the Principles and Practices of Teaching Social Practice Art*. New York: Allworth Press.

Shor, I. and Freire, P. (1987) What is the dialogical method of teaching?. *Journal of Education*, **169**(3), pp.11-31.

The Showroom. (2015) *About The Showroom* [online]. [Accessed 2 April 2015]. Available at: <http://www.theshowroom.org/about.html?id=25>.

Situations (2016) *About Situations* [online]. [Accessed 20 April 2016]. Available at: <http://www.situations.org.uk/about/>.

Spillers, H. (2017) Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book. *in* Wilderson, F.W. (ed.) *Afro-Pessimism: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Racked & Dispatched, pp.91-122.

Spivak, G. (2003) Can the Subaltern Speak?. *in* Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. and Tiffin, H. (eds.) *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader.* E-book edition, London and New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, pp.24-8.

Solnit, R. (2002) *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. 2nd ed. London, New York: Verso.

Sontag, S. (1999) Notes on Camp. *in* Cleto, F. (ed.) *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject: A Reader.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp.53-65.

Sontag, S. (1978) *Illness as Metaphor*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Steedman, M. (ed.) (2012) *Gallery as Community: Art, Education, Politics.* London: Whitechapel Gallery.

Szreder, K. (2017) Productive Withdrawals: Art Strikes, Art Worlds, and Art as a Practice of Freedom [online]. [Accessed 22 January 2018]. Available at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/87/168899/productive-withdrawals-art-strikes-art-worlds-and-art-as-a-practice-of-freedom/>.

Tate Press Release (2015) *Assemble wins the Turner Prize 2015* [online]. [Accessed 29 July 2017]. Available at: <http://www.tate.org.uk/press/press-releases/assemble-wins-turner-prize-2015>.

Thrift, N. (2004) Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect. *Geografiska Annaler*, **86**(1), pp.57-78.

Tsing, A.L. (2015) *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Virno, P. (2004) *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*. (Translated by I. Bertoletti, J. Cascaito and A. Casson). Reprint, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004.

Warner, M. (2002) *Publics and Counterpublics.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Watts, E. Assessing Influence: Art, Auctions and Audiences in Hong Kong. *in* Tong, K.T. (ed.) *Hong Kong Visual Arts Yearbook 2013.* Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, pp.210-219.

Weeks, K. (2007) Life Within and Against Work: Affective Labor, Feminist Critique, and Post-Fordist Politics**.** *ephemera, theory & politics in organisation*, **7**(1), pp.233-249.

Wong, P. (2015) Community Turn: Social Practice in Hong Kong Art. *in* Tong, K.T. (ed.) *Hong Kong Visual Arts Yearbook 2015*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, pp.86-103.

Wooferten (2013) *About Wooferten* [online]. [Accessed 6 September 2013]. Available at: <http://woofer10.blogspot.hk>.

Wooferten (2015) *On "Ending and Occupation", or: Experiments Come to an End One Day* (有關「結束留守」，又或實驗也有完結的一天) [online]. [Accessed 10 December 2017]. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/10153159508841440/>.

Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.) (2008) wo/manifesto. *Working Artists and the Greater Economy* [online]. [Accessed 1 January 2015]. Available at: <http://www.wageforwork.com/about/1/womanifesto>.

Young, I. M. (2001) Activist challenges to deliberative democracy. *Political Theory*, **29**(5), pp.670-690.